

(c) if so, what alternative arrangements have been made for catering to the needs of the people of those areas?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) A wireless station was opened at Hajo in Assam on 31st December, 1951, in connection with the recent General Elections. The wireless station at Uttarkashi was opened on the 26th May, 1952, for the benefit of the pilgrims during the pilgrim season which ends in October, 1952.

(b) Hajo wireless station was closed on the 28th January, 1952. Uttarkashi wireless station is still working.

(c) There is a telegraph office at Amingaon, 12 miles from Fajo. The other offices in this area are North Lakhimpur and Sadia wireless stations.

LABOUR OFFICERS

***2149. Shri Bhakta Darshan:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any Labour Officers working under the Posts and Telegraphs Department;

(b) if so, what is their number and what are their functions;

(c) whether Government have under consideration any proposal to increase their number; and

(d) whether Government are satisfied that they are doing useful work?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) Nine. A relevant extract of Rule No. 11, of the Labour Officers (Central Pool) Recruitment and Conditions of Service, 1951, which details their duties, is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix X, annexure No. 25.]

(c) Yes.

(d) Yes.

TUNDLA-KAS GANJ RAILWAY LINE

***2150. Ch. Raghubir Singh:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a survey for the construction of a railway line from Tundla to Kas Ganj via Etah was ever made; and

(b) whether there is any possibility to revive this survey in near future?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): (a) The reply is in the negative.

(b) It is not proposed to undertake any survey in the near future.

IMPORT OF RICE FROM CHINA

***2151. Shri Muniswamy:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ten thousand tons of rice have been recently imported from China; and

(b) if so, how would they be distributed to the various States of India?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) and (b). We have entered into a contract with the Chinese Government to purchase one lakh metric tons of rice from China. Up to 17-7-52 about 19,300 long tons rice has been received and is being distributed as follows:—

(1) Bombay	3,600
(2) West Bengal	6,100
(3) Madras	7,600
(4) Travancore-Cochin	2,000
	19,300

SHILLONG-AGARTALA ROAD

***2152. Shri S. C. Deb:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether Shillong-Agartala Road is a National Highway and whether the work on the road is being done accordingly;

(b) what part of it will be new construction and what part will be taken from old road; and

(c) in what stage it is now and when the work will be completed?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): (a) No.

(b) Only the Passi-Badarpur and Churaibari-Agartala sections are entirely new construction. The others are improvement of existing kutcha roads or tracks at different stages of development.

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix X, annexure No. 26.]

SHAHADARA-SAHANPUR LIGHT RAILWAY

***2153. Dr. N. B. Khare:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) if the policy of Government under the new re-grouping and re-

organisation scheme was to take over private-owned Railway Companies by the Government;

(b) when did the lease of the Shahadara-Saharanpur Light Railway expire last;

(c) has the lease been renewed; and

(d) if so, the reasons thereof?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): (a) No. The taking over of privately-owned Railways is regulated by contracts with the parties concerned.

(b) to (d). The last option to Government to take over the Shahdara (Delhi) Saharanpur Light Railway occurred on 18-4-48 but was not exercised on financial grounds. There is no question of renewing the lease as according to the terms of the existing contract the option, if not exercised, is automatically postponed and recurs after every 7 years.

RAILWAY LINK FROM GARO HILLS TO ASSAM RAILWAY SYSTEM

*2154. **Jonab Amjad Ali:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to starred question No. 1741 (c) asked on the 14th July, 1952 and state:

(a) whether any preliminary survey was made for the railway line from the main Railway System of Assam to the projected coal fields of Garo Hills and if so, from which place to which place;

(b) what is the estimated cost of the proposed Railway;

(c) whether the cost of constructing a bridge over Brahmaputra between Jogighopa and Pomeharatna was also estimated; if so, what was the total estimate; and

(d) when were these estimates made?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): (a) Preliminary engineering survey was made for a Railway line from Pandu to Darangiri in the Garo Hills via Amjanga.

(b) The line was estimated to cost Rs. 529.91 lakhs.

(c) The hon. Member's attention is invited to the reply given by me to his question No. 1111 on 23rd June 1952, when he was informed that no estimate for the construction of the bridge was prepared.

(d) The estimate for the rail connection between Pandu and Darangiri was prepared in 1950.

SCHEDULED AND BACKWARD CLASSES

*2155. **Shri Elayaperumal:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state whether the Government of India have appointed any Commission to investigate the conditions of Scheduled Classes and Backward classes?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): The matter is under consideration and a decision will be taken shortly.

MATCH WOOD AND SEMAL TREES

538. **Shri Hem Raj:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government put into operation the scheme for the plantation of Match wood and semal trees;

(b) which State possess the most suitable soil for these plantations;

(c) what share the Central Government is contributing to the State Governments for its implementation; and

(d) what sums have been allotted to different States under this scheme?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) Yes.

(b) In every State there are suitable localities in reserve forests for match-wood species.

(c) Central Government have agreed to contribute 50 per cent. of the total expenditure incurred by each State.

(d) For the year 1952-53 we have allocated the following sums to different States:

	Rs.
(1) Uttar Pradesh	78,000
(2) Assam	50,000
(3) Bombay	60,000
(4) Travancore-Cochin	40,000
(5) Madras	7,000
TOTAL	2,35,000

IMPORT OF FOODGRAINS (FREIGHT)

539. **Shri Jhunjhunwala:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity and value of food-grains imported into India in the year 1951 from different countries;