

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) and (b). The proposal for the construction of a Railway line from Patharkandi to Dharmanagar would be considered while selecting new lines for construction during the Second Five Year Plan Period.

SHIPPING SERVICES

***1534. Shri Raghunath Singh:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state whether it is a fact that while the Indian passenger and cargo steamers plying on the west coast of India have cancelled their calling at the Portuguese ports, a Portuguese steamship company has now started a service from Karachi to Goa and Ceylon under Pakistan Agency?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): Yes, Sir.

EMPLOYEES' STATE INSURANCE SCHEME

***1536. Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Employees' State Insurance Scheme has been enforced in Punjab;

(b) if so, the total number of workers coming under the scheme;

(c) how many establishments have been given exemption; and

(d) how many workers are involved in these exempted industries?

The Minister of Labour (Shri Khandubhai Desai): (a) The employees' State Insurance Scheme has been enforced in the following seven industrial centres in Punjab with effect from the 17th May, 1953:—

- (1) Ambala.
- (2) Ludhiana.
- (3) Jullundur.
- (4) Amritsar.
- (5) Batala.
- (6) Abdullapur Jagadhri.
- (7) Bhiwani.

↳(b) About 32,000 employees.

(c) and (d). Exemptions have been granted by the Central Government under sections 73F and 90 and by the Government of Punjab under section 87 of the Employees State Insurance Act, 1948. The total number of factories exempted in the State is 44. Full information regarding the number of workers involved is not available. In addition, factories in which less than ten persons are employed by the principal employer, even though the number of persons working in the premises is twenty or more have also been exempted under the Act.

NIGHT AIR MAIL

***1537. Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines Corporation propose to reduce the all-up weight of the night air-mail;

(b) if so, the reduction proposed;

(c) when it will be given effect to; and

(d) how it will affect the passenger traffic of the night air-mail?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) and (c). The all-up weight of Dakota aircraft used on the Night Mail Services was reduced by 700 lbs. with effect from the 1st March, 1955.

(d) Broadly speaking, the number of passenger seats available on each night-plane will be reduced by three or four.

BRIDGE AND STRUCTURE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

***1538. Kumari Annie Mascarene:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the Members of the Bridge and Structure Standards Committee; and

(b) the average annual expenditure incurred on this Committee?