

Sardar Iqbal Singh : May I know whether Government have any proposal for radio telephone service between East Africa and India and for the island of Fiji also where there are a large number of Indians settled?

Shri Raj Bahadur : For 1956, I have given a list in the statement. As regards Africa and West Africa, in the Second Five Year Plan, we propose to connect by radio telegraph or radio telephone the following places:

East Africa, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia.

These are the places that come under it.

Sardar Iqbal Singh : May I know whether the Government will consider the case of Fiji Islands where a large number of Indians are living?

Shri Raj Bahadur : We shall examine the traffic potential and how it stands at present.

P. AND T DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

*388. **Shri Nambiar :** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of employees of the Posts and Telegraphs Department, declared surplus in 1955 but not yet absorbed;

(b) the number likely to be declared surplus in 1956 as a result of automatisation of telephones; and

(c) whether Government have any plans to reemploy these retrenched personnel?

The Minister in the Ministry of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur) :

(a) Nil.

(b) 558 Telephone Operators plus other engineering staff whose number is not yet known.

(c) Yes, alternative employment will be found for the regular employees.

Shri Nambiar : May I know whether in absorbing, the previous services of the work-charged establishment has not been taken into consideration?

Shri Raj Bahadur : We have taken in all those who were permanently or temporarily on the staff. Those who were daily-rated *mazdoors* or on what is known as the work-charged establishment are not regular employees. We took them up for odd jobs for short spaces of time and they were taken according to the nature of the job.

Shri Nambiar : Is it a fact that while absorbing them, less pay was given in many cases?

Shri Raj Bahadur : So far as regular employees are concerned, 'No'.

Shri Nambiar : May I know whether it is true that the concession extended by the Director-General earlier was subsequently not followed up in the matter of absorption and in the case of break of service?

Shri Raj Bahadur : I think the questions as written over and dictated to my hon. friend are not related to facts.

Shri Nambiar : He says, written over and given to me. I wanted to know whether any broken service is taken into consideration. He is to say whether it is so or not and not whether it is written over and handed to me.

Shri Raj Bahadur : It is a point of order, Sir, whether a supplementary question could be written and read out from a paper.

Shri K. K. Basu : The hon. Minister must behave properly.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : Order, order.

The Minister of Communications (Shri Jagjivan Ram) : The point is whether a supplementary question can be a written one.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : I casually looked into some papers regarding the points of order relating to reading out of supplementary questions in

the House of Commons. We were also gathering information on this point. There written speeches are not allowed, but here I am allowing written speeches sometimes.

Shri Jagjivan Ram rose.

Shri Raj Bahadur : Written supplementaries ought not to be allowed. Sir.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : But hon. Members, who may not find it very easy to remember, occasionally may refer to notes. The hon. Minister might have easily.....

Shri Raj Bahadur : If it is a written question, then it will be better to give it to us in writing so that we may be able to give a reply.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao : What the Minister said was "wittin over and given to the hon. Member".

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : I thought the hon. Minister wanted evidently.....

Shri Velayudhan : It is insinuation, Sir.

Shri K. K. Basu : Why should such insinuation be allowed to be made?

Shri Kamath : It is derogatory to the hon. Member.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : The hon. Member is not a postal employee or a railway employee to know everything about them. We have to deal with every kind of issue here, and unless we are coached properly.....

Shri Kamath : Not coaching.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : Unless we are properly briefed—I shall use the word 'brief' instead of 'coach'—we are not expected to know everything in the world. Therefore, there is nothing wrong if Shri Nambiar gets some information from some others. What the Minister has said is happening every day and to that extent he is right. Therefore, there is no use in reading out supplementary questions. Supplementary questions ought not to be read.

Shri R. N. Reddy : Even the Ministers are briefed.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : Therefore, supplementary questions may be asked orally. If the hon. Minister had said that it ought not be read, there is every justification for it. Now, what is the answer to his question?

An Hon. Member : What is the question?

Shri Nambiar : In the case of re-employment, may I know whether the break in service was taken into consideration or whether the promise given by the Director-General earlier was flouted?

Shri Jagjivan Ram : May I know from the hon. Member what is the assurance given by the Director-General?

Shri Nambiar : I can give him the note.

Shri Jagjivan Ram : Let him send me the note, but I may assure the hon. Member that so far as every telephone operator in the telephone exchanges where automatism is taking place is concerned—I repeat the assurance—he will not be discharged and he will be given the service from that very day and there will not be any break in service.

Shri Kamath : With reference to part (c) of the question, the Deputy Minister stated.....

Shri B. S. Murthy : He is Minister of State now.

Shri Kamath : Then minus Deputy. The Minister stated that alternative employment will be found for those who were thrown on the streets as a result of the action in part (b). May I know whether alternative employment has been found already for at least a few of these people in view of the Prime Minister's assurance given some time ago that Government will go slow with automation and rationalisation, in another context, if it results in unemployment?

Shri Jagjivan Ram : I do not think it results in unemployment. Perhaps the hon. Member is confusing the two questions. Wherever as a result of automatization we find that operators in the existing telephone exchanges are surplus to requirements, we find alternative employment to every permanent employee of such exchanges, and therefore, the question of retrenchment does not arise.

Shri Kamath : My question was whether Government have already found alternative employment for some of these persons.

Shri Jagjivan Ram : Yes, I have not got the figures with me now, but quite a number for all of them. If there is any case where a permanent operator has not been given employment, I will be happy to receive information from the hon. Member and will go into it.

Shri Kamath : That is fine.

Shri D. C. Sharma : I rise on a point of order. Could there be a dialogue going on between the hon. Minister and an hon. Member like this?

Shri Kamath : He does not know what a dialogue means.

BENCHES OF LABOUR APPELLATE TRIBUNALS

***389. Ch. Raghuraj Singh :** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have increased the number of Benches to dispose of appeals and applications pending before the Labour Appellate Tribunals;

(b) if so, their number and at what places; and

(c) the number of appeals and applications still pending?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali) : (a) and (b). During 1955-56, six additional Benches, two each at Madras, Calcutta and Lucknow were constituted raising the total

number to 10. The Benches are located at the following places:—

Bombay	—	2 Benches
Calcutta	—	3 Benches
Lucknow	—	3 Benches
Madras	—	2 Benches

With a view to enabling the Labour Appellate Tribunal to attend to the more important work of hearing appeals, the Chairman of the Appellate Tribunal has been statutorily empowered to transfer applications under sections 22 and 23 of the Industrial Disputes (Appellate Tribunal) Act, 1950 to specified Industrial Tribunals. For dealing with the applications two *ad hoc* Industrial Tribunals, one at Madras and the other at Lucknow, have been constituted. The Central Government's standing Tribunal at Dhanbad has also been entrusted with the work of disposing some of the applications.

(c) On the 31st January, 1956, 984 appeals and 1,977 applications were pending with the Labour Appellate Tribunal and 168 applications with the Industrial Tribunals.

Ch. Raghuraj Singh : May I know the reasons for delay in disposing of these appeals or applications?

Shri Abid Ali : Now the disposal is very much speedy. Formerly there was some delay because we wanted to have only retired judges of high courts to be appointed on these benches, but as retired judges were not available from high courts, we took retired sessions judges and therefore the work is being disposed of much quicker now.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao : May I know what happened to the proposal to have a Bench at Hyderabad?

Shri Abid Ali : Very few appeals there are from Hyderabad, and most of them have already been disposed of. Therefore, there was no justification for constituting a Bench at Hyderabad.

Shri K. K. Basu : May I know whether there is a proposal to do