

opium except such as those laid down by the individual State Governments under their own excise and prohibition regulations, for users within their respective territories. Particulars are not available at the Centre.

(b) At the All-India Opium Conference, 1949, all the then Provinces and States agreed to the total elimination of the oral consumption of opium (i.e. consumption for purposes other than medical and scientific) by the end of March 1959 at the latest. Accordingly, with effect from 1949, supplies by the Government of India of opium to each individual State are being progressively reduced by 10 per cent. annually.

(c) By March 1959, supplies of opium to each State are expected to be reduced to nil. In 'Prohibition' States (e.g. Bombay, Madras and Assam) the non-medical consumption of opium is expected to be totally eliminated even earlier.

DEFENCE STORES IMPREST

287. **Shri M. L. Dwivedi:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have accepted the suggestion of the audit authorities for the restriction of the amount of imprest on the basis of actual immediate requirements;

(b) whether periodical verification of balance is being made by the officers of the Military Accounts Department; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative, whether these have been brought into actual practice?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Gopalaswami): (a) to (c). Yes, except that in the case of the Army the question in regard to periodical verification of balance is under active consideration.

CONTROL OVER EXPENDITURE

288. **Shri M. L. Dwivedi:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether necessary rules and regulations to ensure that spending Ministries exercise proper checks and show complete responsibility in the matter of budgeting and keeping control over expenditure, have been framed;

(b) if so, when were these rules enforced or are likely to be enforced; and

(c) whether a copy thereof can be placed on the Table of the House?

The Minister of State for Finance (Shri Tyagi): (a) to (c). I would invite attention to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 218 on the 19th June 1952. Some of the instructions are recent ones designed to secure improvement wherever this was necessary.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

289. **Shri M. L. Dwivedi:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government of India on the recommendations of the Estimates Committee contained in their fifth Report to the effect that there should be a specific machinery for ensuring full Parliamentary control over the various schemes and that an explanatory memorandum showing the nature of the scheme, the cost involved, the organisation proposed to undertake the work and other allied matters should be presented to Parliament along with the plans and further that whenever changes in the plans or estimates are required to be made, specific approval of Parliament should be obtained;

(b) whether positive motions seeking the approval of Parliament in all such matters are being brought before the House of the People; and

(c) whether sometime in the year has been set apart for the discussion of progress of work and other allied matters concerning the projects?

The Minister of State for Finance (Shri Tyagi): The Fifth Report, 1951-52 of the Estimates Committee is still under consideration of the Government.

RECRUITMENT TO ARMED FORCES

290. **Shri Ganpati Ram:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state the percentage of Scheduled Castes recruited in 1948-49, 1949-50, 1950-51 and 1951-52 in the Army, Navy and Air Force?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Gopalaswami): No separate statistics are maintained in the three services, since recruitment, whether of officers or of men, is made without any distinction of class or creed.