

(b) Under the rules, only Railway Medical Officers are considered as "Authorised Medical Attendants" for railway employees and their families, except that in the case of treatment of adult women members of a Railway Servant's family in certain specified non-Railway Hospitals, the Superintendent or the Head of the Hospital is regarded as the competent authority for authorizing the reimbursement of medical expenses.

CALCUTTA TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

684. Shri Jethalal Joshi: (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state how far has the scheme of Automatic Telephone System in Calcutta progressed?

(b) What is the estimated cost of the scheme and what amount has been spent upto March, 1952?

(c) What percentage of the total value of the contract has been agreed to be given to Messrs. A. T. & E. Company for the purposes of installation of the Exchanges?

(d) When is the whole scheme likely to be completed?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) A statement is laid on the Table of the House [See Appendix VII, annexure No. 34.]

(b) Rs. 1,340 lakhs. The amount spent upto March, 1952, is Rs. 316 lakhs approximately.

(c) Agreement for installing only the Stage I exchanges, that is, Tarasankar Avenue and Central, totalling approximately 14,000 lines, has been entered into with A. T. & E. Company. Payment to the Company for this purpose constitutes about 14 per cent of the total cost of installation of all the exchanges in the project.

(d) By 1958.

PHOTODUPLICATION MACHINERY

685. Shri Jethalal Joshi: (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state if it is a fact that a Photoduplication machinery has been set up for printing postage stamps?

(b) What are the annual requirements of the Postage Stamps in India and what is the capacity of the machine to cope with the demand?

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

(b) The approximate annual requirements of postage stamps is estimated

at 1387 million stamps and the capacity of the new machine is sufficient to meet the all India demand. A third machine has still to be installed. The total capacity then is expected to be roughly 2,000 million stamps a year.

P. AND T. EMPLOYEES

886. Shri Jethalal Joshi: (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state what are the main items of welfare activities for the employees of the Posts and Telegraphs Department?

(b) What is the amount of grant provided for the above mentioned activities in the year 1952-53?

(c) Is it a fact that there was a provision for Rs. 8,50,000 for the same activities in the year 1949-50, and only Rs. 39,000 were spent?

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

- (1) Co-operative Societies
- (2) Canteens
- (3) Recreation Clubs
- (4) Night Schools
- (5) Holiday Homes
- (6) Dispensaries

(7) Organisation of Regional and All India Posts and Telegraphs Athletic Meet.

(b) Rs. 3,50,000/-

(c) Yes; Out of the provision of 84 lakhs a sum of Rs. 5 lakhs was intended for the construction of hospitals for P. & T. staff, Rs. 50,000 for canteens and a lump provision of Rs. 3 lakhs for other amenities. When the question of constructing the hospitals was examined in greater detail, it was found that there were several difficulties in implementing the proposal. The P. & T. staff are entitled to the same medical aid as other Central Government employees. The question arose whether it would be advisable to provide separate hospitals for the staff of P. & T. only. It was also not possible to construct hospitals with all the modern facilities with the limited funds that would become available for the purpose. The proposal for constructing separate hospitals for the exclusive use of the P. & T. staff had therefore to be dropped. An amount of Rs. 34 lakhs was provided for such items as formation of co-operative societies giving grants to canteens and opening of night schools. The number of co-operative societies opened and canteens started by the staff during the year were not very large and hence the full amount earmarked for the purpose could not be utilised.