

RETRENCHMENT OF POSTAL STAFF

63. **Shri Jethalal Joshi:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state the number of temporary clerks of Posts and Telegraphs Department of Saurashtra and Kutch who have been discharged in June, 1953?

(b) Is it a fact that clerks from Maharashtra and Karnatak have been ordered to fill those vacant posts in Saurashtra?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) 61 including 12 men operators.

(b) Thirty approved candidates belonging to Maharashtra and Karnatak have been appointed. Candidates from outside Saurashtra have to be appointed because only 8 approved candidates of this state are available. The recruitment is made for the Circle as a whole on merit.

LOCUST SWARM NEAR PVSA INSTITUTE AREA

64. **Shri K. G. Deshmukh:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a large-swarm of locusts, three miles long and about half a mile wide, passed over Delhi in the month of May, 1953 by the side of Pusa Institute area?

(b) Is it a fact that the locusts that were noticed were fully mature and of the egg-laying type?

(c) What steps had Government taken to defend the invasion of these locusts?

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

(b) No.

(c) We cannot prevent the invasion of swarms from outside India. Some countries to the west of us, where locust swarms originate have set up anti-locust organisations. We had recently sent a team to Iran to assist that country in destroying locusts. A statement showing our arrangements for destroying locusts and hoppers is placed on the Table of the House. Attention of the Member is also invited to the reply given by me to

the Starred Question No. 1375 by Shri L. J. Singh on the 16th April, 1953. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 44.]

RURAL PGST OFFICES

65. **Shri K. G. Deshmukh:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state how many new post offices have been opened in the rural areas during the year 1952-53 in the Central Circle?

(b) What was the target fixed for the said Circle for the year 1952-53?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) 111 post offices were opened in the rural areas of the Central Circle.

(b) The target aimed at was to open post offices in all villages with a population of 2000 and more.

CASUAL LABOUR

66. **Shri Vittal Rao:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state the number of casual labourers working on the 1st April, 1953 on the Railways?

(b) How many casual labourers have been absorbed as regular employees during the financial year 1952-53?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) 56,602.

(b) 7,815.

LATE RUNNING OF TRAINS

67. **Shri Tushar Chatterjee:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been cases of late and irregular running of Suburban trains at Howrah and Sealdah;

(b) if so, the number of such cases reported to Government;

(c) whether there have been any conflicts between passenger and staff as a result of this late and irregular running of trains;