

(c) Are Government aware that civil air passengers are put to inconvenience by the I.A.F. employees?

(d) If so, what arrangements do Government propose to make for civilian passengers at the said air port?

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

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A report to this effect has been received from the hon. Member.

(d) Action is being taken to investigate the matter. Instructions have been issued meanwhile that whatever facilities were available to civil passengers prior to the transfer of the aerodrome to the Air Force should be restored. The provision of a separate Civil Aviation Terminal building at the aerodrome is also under consideration.

RAILWAY RATES TRIBUNAL

***440. Shri K. C. Sodhia:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the present constitution of the Railway Rates Tribunal;

(b) the number of formal complaints received by them under Section 41 of the Railway Act during 1952-53; and

(c) the number of applications, if any, made to them by the Central Government under Section 42(1) of the Act?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) The Railway Rates Tribunal consists of a President and two other members appointed by the Central Government.

(b) Five complaints under Section 41 of the Indian Railways' Act were received by the Tribunal during 1952-53; one of these has been allowed to be withdrawn.

(c) No application was made to the Railway Rates Tribunal by the Central Government under Section 42(1)

of the Indian Railways' Act during 1952-53; during 1950-51 two applications were made and during 1951-52 two more applications were made. One of them was subsequently withdrawn.

IMPORTED WHEAT

***441. Shri Kakkan:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to reduce the price of imported wheat; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the same?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):

(a) and (b). The pool price of imported wheat has been reduced by Re. 1/- per maund with effect from 15-11-1953. The reduction was made as a result of periodical review of pool prices which are fixed at the beginning of the year on the basis of the best available estimates of sources of supply and price etc.

TRAINS IN NORTH GUJRAT

***442. Shri S. G. Parikh:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware that on the Metre Gauge Section of the Western Railway in North Gujrat, trains on the branch lines are getting irregular and many a time the passengers are stranded overnight at the road side stations due to failure of engines and short supply of water?

(b) Is it a fact that some old locomotives have been brought there and if so, why?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) No. However, in the month of October, 1953, the punctuality of passengers trains in the Mehsana District suffered due to unavoidable causes such as engine failures and sudden failure of

water supply at roadside stations. The position has since improved.

(b) No. More suitable locomotives have replaced those previously in use.

CARDAMOM

208. **Shri V. P. Nayar:** Will the Minister of **Food and Agriculture** be pleased to lay on the Table of the House a statement showing the quantity of cardamom produced in India during the years 1950 to 1953, State-wise?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): A statement giving the available information is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 69.]

WOOD PRESERVATIVES

209. **Shri V. P. Nayar:** (a) Will the Minister of **Food and Agriculture** be pleased to state whether the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun has evolved any wood preservative other than the mixture of Arsenic Oxide, Copper Sulphate and Potassium Bichromate or "Creosote"?

(b) If so, what are such preservatives and what are their ingredients?

(c) How far have the efficacy, economy, suitability and permanence of such preservatives been proved?

(d) What is the estimated quantity of timber subjected to treatment with wood preservatives in a year?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):

(a) Yes.

(b) (1) Antiseptic-cum-fireproof composition consisting of boric acid, copper sulphate, zinc chloride, sodium dichromate and water.

(2) Copper organic salt preservative from Mahua oil.

(3) Copper organic salt preservative from *chir* resin.

(c) (1) The antiseptic-cum-fireproof composition was evolved primarily

because of a request from the Central Standards Office, Ministry of Railways for the treatment of *Chir* and laurel B. G. Sleepers for trials on the line. Their behaviour is being watched.

(2) Copper organic salt preservative from Mahua oil:—

This preservative was prepared during the war when the supply of wood preservatives was scarce, but since it involved the use of oils which also became very scarce, further work was discontinued.

(3) Copper organic salt preservative from *chir* resin:—

A simple copper salt from *chir* resin has been prepared and is useful, for protection of timber used for the furniture, toys, door and window frames etc. Attempts to develop it economically on a cottage industry scale are being made.

(d) As a broad estimate about 3 to 4 million cu. ft. of timber is treated per annum for use as railway sleepers, telegraph poles, wood piles, tea-chests etc.

ANTI-LOCUST OPERATIONS IN RAJASTHAN

210. **Shri Karni Singhji:** (a) Will the Minister of **Food and Agriculture** be pleased to refer to the reply to unstarred question No. 219 asked on the 24th November, 1952 and state whether the actual figures of damage done to crops by locusts during 1952 have since been collected?

(b) If so, do Government propose to lay it on the Table of the House?

(c) How much damage has been done to the crops by locusts during 1953 in Rajasthan, particularly the Bikaner and Jodhpur Divisions and the amount spent on anti-locust operations during the year 1953 in these Divisions?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):

(a) Yes.