

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): (a) Yes, Sir. Certain sugarcane diseases, notably red-rot, have been raging in parts of U.P., Bihar, Punjab, West Bengal and Orissa as localised epidemics. The area affected does not, however, exceed one percent of the total area under cane in these States;

(b) Concerted attempts to replace varieties which are susceptible to various diseases of sugarcane with resistant strains as also the necessary protective and eradication measures are being taken by the States concerned.

SECUNDERABAD HEAD POST OFFICE

***1343. Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 808 on the 21st December, 1955 and state:

(a) the date of the commencement of construction work of the Head Post Office, Secunderabad;

(b) the likely time required for its completion; and

(c) the estimated cost of the building?

The Minister in the Ministry of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) During 1956-57.

(b) Two years from the date of commencement.

(c) Rs. 2,35,000/- approximately.

CONFERENCE ON MARKETING AND CO-OPERATION

***1344. Shri Sivamurthi Swami:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether a conference on Marketing and Co-operation was held in Jaipur during the first week of February, 1956;

(b) whether the need for regulating markets in order to promote orderly marketing and increase in the farmer's return has been keenly felt by Government; and

(c) the steps Central and State Governments propose to take for market news service organisation?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The scheme is under consideration.

INLAND WATER TRANSPORT

***1345. Shri M. Islamuddin:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have investigated into the possibilities of developing and expanding river routes in the country which could be co-ordinated with the sea and rail-routes; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Government have kept in view the desirability of coordinating inland water routes with rail and sea routes while formulating their plans for the development of inland waterways.

(b) Provision has been made in the Second Five Year Plan for the development of selected inland river stations on the Ganga and the Brahmaputra with provision for improved rail connections also. In the South, the possibility of linking the Buckingham canal with the Madras Harbour is being investigated.

RAILWAY ESTABLISHMENT CODE

***1346. Shri Ganpati Ram:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether any amendment has been made to Rule 1704 (ii) (a) of the Railways Establishment Code as printed in that Volume (Second Reprint) of 1951;

(b) if so, when and with whose sanction;

(c) if not, whether it is a fact that there are cases in which railway servants have been dismissed from service by the authorities other than those specified in Rule 1704(ii) (a);