

a facility to a substantial number of passengers.

LOCUST CENTRES

403. Sardar Iqbal Singh : Will the Minister of **Food and Agriculture** be pleased to state the expenditure incurred on the anti-locust Centres during the year 1955-56?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh) : It is not possible to give actual figures of expenditure incurred during 1955-56 at this stage. The sanctioned budget grant for the Central Locust Warning Organisation and Anti-Locust Co-ordinated Scheme for the year 1955-56 is, however, Rs. 21,18,500, out of which it is anticipated that a sum of about Rs. 19 lakhs would be spent during the current year.

DRUGS ACT

404. Shrimati Jayashri : Will the Minister of **Health** be pleased to state whether Government have any information regarding the number of prosecutions launched since the passing of the Drugs Act?

The Minister of Health (Rajkumari Amrit Kaur) : The required information is being collected and a statement will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha in due course.

EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES

405. Shri Hem Raj : Will the Minister of **Labour** be pleased to state :

(a) the number of applicants seeking employment registered with the employment exchanges in the year 1955 in the States of Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh ; and

(b) the number of persons employed?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali) : (a) and (b). A statement is placed on the Table of the Lok Sabha. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 28.]

TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTIONS ON RAILWAYS

406. Shri Waghmare : Will the Minister of **Railways** be pleased to state the total number of Technical Institutions existing on various Railway Zones separately in Carriage and Wagon Branch for imparting initial training and refresher course to the Train Examining Personnel of the Mechanical Departments of the Railway?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) : There are no separate Technical Institutions for imparting initial and refresher courses to the Train Examining Personnel on Railways. A statement is attached showing the number of Training Schools and those where the train examining personnel are given initial and refresher courses. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 29.]

RICE AND PADDY

407. Shri N. B. Chowdhury : Will the Minister of **Food and Agriculture** be pleased to state :

(a) whether any steps have been taken to purchase rice and paddy at a reasonable rate in areas where the prices have fallen below economic level ; and

(b) if so, at what rates and in which areas?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh) : (a) and (b). A scheme of price support for rice/paddy is already in force. Under this scheme which was introduced at the beginning of the current *kharif* season, Government offer to purchase direct from the cultivators at railhead centres, coarse rice at Rs. 11 per maund if the prices fall below these levels. The scheme applies to all States except Manipur and Tripura. In view, however, of the rice and paddy prices ruling much above the support prices, no purchases have so far been made under this scheme in any State.