

state, whether in view of the formation of the new State of Madhya Pradesh Government would consider the feasibility of running two mail trains direct upto Bhopal, one from Manikpur *via* Satna and the other from Bilaspur *via* Shahdol Katni and linking other distant parts of Madhya Pradesh to Bhopal generally by running through trains ?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) : It is not feasible to introduce two mail trains direct upto Bhopal, one from Manikpur *via* Satna and the other from Bilaspur *via* Katni due to paucity of coaching stock and locomotives and inadequate line capacity between Katni and Manikpur and Katni and Bilaspur.

Railway Booking Agencies in Delhi

1210. Shri Velayudhan : Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the number of city booking agencies in Delhi;

(b) who are the agents that have taken their agencies;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Delhi-Subzimandi Booking Agency is given to a single person for years together; and

(d) what is the difficulty in taking it over by Government itself ?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) : (a) Seven.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix V, annexure No. 74]

(c) The contract for the Delhi-Subzimandi City Booking Agency has been held by M/s. Ramlal Jaggi & Sons since 1-12-53, the date of its opening.

(d) No necessity has arisen to consider the question of taking over this agency for departmental working.

Improvement of Stations on Katni-Bilaspur Line

1211. Shri A. C. Joshi : Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether Government are taking or propose to take appropriate steps to improve the Railway Station Buildings and Railway platforms at Chandia, Umaria Birsingpur, Shahdol, Burhar, Anuppur in Katni Bilaspur line of the Eastern Railway ?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) : These stations are on the South Eastern

Railway. There is no proposal for improvement of station buildings and platforms at these stations except at Shahdol where provision for separate rooms for station master and booking and parcel office is under consideration. Umaria and Chandia Road stations are already provided with high level platforms.

Flood Relief Measures in Delhi

1212. Shri Kamath : Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to refer to the Statement laid on the Table in answer to Starred Question No. 1020 on the 11th December, 1956 and state;

(a) why the statement is blank with regard to relief measures taken in Delhi State;

(b) whether any measures have since been taken; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

The Deputy Minister of Food (Shri M. V. Krishnappa) : (a) to (c). The Delhi Administration had not then furnished the necessary information. The requisite information has since been obtained and is as under :—

Financial assistance Nature of relief measure

(i) Rs. 25,000/- Evacuation of persons and cattle from the marooned areas and other relief operations.

(ii) Rs. 4,00,000/- Loans given for fodder and seed taccavi.

In addition recovery of Taccavi Loan to the extent of Rs. 2 lakhs has been deferred.

Foodgrain Prices

1213. Shri Kamath : Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in early September, 1956 he confidently forecast in Parliament an appreciable fall in foodgrain prices within a fortnight or so;

(b) whether this has not proved to be so; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor ?

The Deputy Minister of Food (Shri M. V. Krishnappa) : (a) to (c). The prices did record a fall in September, but unfortunately exceptionally heavy floods in that month caused considerable damage to crops and reversed the downward trend of prices. The deterioration