

(n) if so, the names of the States and the steps Government have taken to alleviate such conditions?

The Deputy Minister of Food (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): (a) and (b). A detailed statement about the food situation in the country has already been made in the Sabha on 14-5-57.

Rise in Foodgrain Prices

*169. **Shri Anirudha Sinha:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) in what proportion the prices of foodgrains have risen in the country since January last;

(b) the maximum increase so far in the prices of rice, oil-seeds and wheat; and

(c) the name of the State in which the rise in prices of foodgrains has been the highest?

The Deputy Minister of Food (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of Lok Sabha. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 36].

Shri Kasliwal: There are all sorts of conflicting reports appearing in the Press about the foodgrain prices. May I know what is the price of wheat and the price of barley recently prevalent in the mandis?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): What mandis does the hon. Member refer to? Generally speaking the price of *dara* wheat today is between Rs. 13-4-0 and Rs. 15; the price of barley is near about Rs. 10.

Shri L. N. Mishra: In Bihar, while the supply of foodgrains has improved to a considerable extent, no adequate provision has been made for transporting the foodgrains to the fair-price shops. May I know whether the Government have any scheme for co-ordinating the supplies with the transport system?

Shri A. P. Jain: The Central Government will see that the foodgrains reach the rail-head destination; after that, it is the responsibility of the State Government to do the internal distribution and to see that the foodgrains reach the fair-price shops.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know what steps the Government are taking in order to prevent hoarding, because I think all these difficulties are to some extent due to the hoarding of foodgrains?

Shri A. P. Jain: The Government is very much alive to this question. I would not like to discuss the steps which we propose to take in this regard.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: There are always transhipment difficulties between North Bihar and South Bihar. The hon. Minister has just now said that he will take the foodgrains to the rail-head destinations. I would like to know what steps, in consultation with the railways, the Government have taken to see that supply of foodgrains to North Bihar is maintained?

Shri A. P. Jain: Since last year, we have been following the practice that before the rains start, we stock sufficient quantities of foodgrains in North Bihar. This year we propose to stock 15,000 tons of wheat in North Bihar. This quantity will be supplied by the end of this month or by the beginning of the next month.

Shri H. C. Mathur: Is it a fact that prices of foodgrains had been going down in all the places except in certain places, and if so, what are the places where the prices are going down?

Shri A. P. Jain: The prices of wheat and gram have been going down. We have been collecting figures from a large number of mandis and in more than 60 per cent of the cases the price of wheat is going down. Similarly we have been collecting figures for gram from a fairly large number

of mandis and in more than 95 per cent. of the cases the prices are either steady or are going down. The price of rice has gone up and it is at present more or less steady.

Shri Wodeyar: May I know whether the Government of the Mysore State sought any immediate help, and if so the same granted and to what extent? Has the Government of India any permanent solution for removal of these conditions?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: In the North Karnatak, that is North Mysore, in about three or four districts the main crop is the juar crop which has been affected by heavy rains. Last year the yield had gone down and there the prices of juar has gone up to Rs. 14 to Rs. 15 per maund. Last week I was there and told them that ample supply of fine quality of wheat is being supplied at Rs. 14 per maund in all these areas. We have started three central storage depots at Belgaum, Bijapur and Gulbarga and enough of wheat is moved to these storage depots and from there the wheat is supplied to the fair price shops.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know whether the 3,000 tons of wheat allotted by the Food Ministry to the State of Assam has reached the State? We have seen a report to the effect that the allotment of the 3,000 tons of wheat has not reached the State of Assam. Is it a fact?

Shri A. P. Jain: In fact, up till now it was the responsibility of the Assam Government to lift the wheat from Calcutta. The Development Minister of Assam saw me only two or three days ago. I had a full discussion with him. In future we propose to keep stocks of both rice and wheat in Assam. To Assam we have already despatched about 8,000 tons of rice which is in transit and we shall shortly be despatching about 10,000 tons more of rice and also wheat.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know whether the Supply Minister of Assam made a demand for 20,000 tons of rice for the State. At the same time he has

also made a demand for the opening up of reserve centres in important towns of Assam, because Assam is often cut off from the rest of India during the monsoons.

Shri A. P. Jain: So far as figures are concerned, I know them much better than the hon. Member, because I had discussions with the Assam Government and I am directly in correspondence with them. So far as building up of stocks are concerned, both of rice and of wheat, we will build those stocks before the rains fully set in.

Shri Hem Barua rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow three questions at a time.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: The hon. Minister intervening in the debate on the President's Address quoted some figures of hoarding. In view of the fact that the new harvest is impending, will the hon. Minister be pleased to take immediate steps to prevent further hoarding of the food stocks?

Shri A. P. Jain: I am very conscious of that.

Shri C. D. Pande: May I know whether in view of the rising prices of wheat in Uttar Pradesh, at least in my constituency of Haldwani, will the hon. Minister instruct the Government of Uttar Pradesh to take away the sales tax so that wheat may be made cheaper than it is today?

Shri A. P. Jain: I am afraid that I have no powers to order the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Shri C. D. Pande: Since you subsidise you have the power.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: May I know how much grain has been given over to West Bengal to enable the opening of fair price shops and how many fair price shops have been opened in West Bengal and how many gruel kitchens up to date?

Shri A. P. Jain: In this month we have given them 10,000 tons of rice.

In addition to that we have been issuing about 35,000 tons of wheat per month. The initial quantity of 6,000 tons has been issued. I do not know how many fair price shops have been opened. Apparently the West Bengal Government is busy opening a number of fair price shops.

Shri Palanandi: Arising out of the answer, and in view of the fact that the rising prices of rice are going to affect mostly Southern India, may I know whether Government have taken steps to release the necessary stocks in South India?

Shri Venkatasubbaiah: In view of the fact that the Rayalaseema districts in Andhra Pradesh have been adversely affected on account of excessive rains, may I know whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has made any representations for the supply of the required millets to this part of the area?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: So far as Rayalaseema districts are concerned, wherever jowar is grown, the jowar crop was affected particularly last year. I had a meeting with the Andhra Pradesh Government last week, and Shri Thimma Reddi, the Food Minister, asked for the supply of wheat and rice to Andhra. We have assured them that the wheat demand will be met, and with regard to rice also, if they require rice, we are prepared to supply it in Hyderabad City.

Several Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: There are as many as forty names put down here against this question. Even if I limit myself to calling all the hon. Members who have taken the trouble of tabling the question, the whole hour will be over. This is a very important matter, scarcity of food and rising prices. The whole House seems to be interested in it. Therefore, if hon. Members are willing to sit next Saturday, I will

allow a two-hour debate on this matter—both on food scarcity and prices. If there is still demand, we will raise it to two and a half hours.

Several Hon. Members: Yes.

Shri A. P. Jain: May I suggest, Sir, that you may devote the whole of Saturday to a debate on food? Because, I want to hear as many points of view as possible.

Mr. Speaker: How many hours does he want on Saturday? We do not have Question Hour on that day. Then, we shall have from 11 to 6, or till as long as we sit.

Shri Tyagi: Why till six? The House will have been fed up by that time.

Shri Raghunath Singh: Eleven to Five.

Mr. Speaker: Did the hon. Minister say it in a huff?

Shri A. P. Jain: No, Sir. I really said I have been wanting to hear the suggestions from hon. Members.

Shri Thirumal Rao: May I know if the hon. Minister is going to substantially add to what he has already said by way of statement? Otherwise, what is the use of the debate being carried on the whole day?

Mr. Speaker: He is willing to sit the whole day and answer. But if other hon. Members get tired, he will also go.

Shri A. P. Jain: I have nothing more to add to the statement I have already made, but I would like to have more suggestions, and particularly some constructive suggestions from hon. Members.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: In view of the fact that a debate on the food situation has already been held in the course of the discussion on the motion of thanks to the President, and in view of the fact that we have not been able to gather how far the various State Governments have taken steps in this direction, may I request

the hon. Minister through you, Sir that after some days or towards the end of this session, if he is able to gather information from the various States, he might lay a statement on the Table of the House, so that we will be able to know the latest position?

Shri A. P. Jain: I have no objection to this course and I can lay such information as I am able to get from the State Governments on the Table of the House. But it will take a little time, and I will be able to do it only at the end of the session.

Shri B. S. Murthy: The debate will be of no use without that further information. We should know before Saturday what steps have been taken by the State Governments to arrest the prices.

Mr. Speaker: The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs is not here. I suppose he also will be willing and see to it that there is sufficient quorum on that day. The maintenance of quorum is in his hands. Anyhow, further supplementaries regarding this question will stand over. This question is closed today. If there is some difficulty in having a separate day or a special session on Saturday, I will allow two hours at the end of any of these days. I will intimate to the House tomorrow in consultation with the hon. Minister.

Central Anti-Locust Unit

*139. **Shri Shree Narayan Das:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) what is the precise nature of work with which the Central Anti-Locust Unit of India is engaged at present;

(b) the names of the countries where officers of this unit are working;

(c) whether any assessment of its work and achievement has been made; and

(d) if so, the result of such assessment?

The Minister of Co-operation (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of Lok Sabha. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 37].

Shri Shree Narayan Das: It appears from the statement that this unit has been participating in an international campaign against desert locusts. I would like to know whether, for participation in the international campaign, any part of the expenditure involved has been borne by the international organisation or the whole of the expenditure was borne by the Government of India.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I have not got the figure of total expenditure. The expenditure we have borne varies between Rs. 1,60,000 and Rs. 2,74,000.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: I wanted to know what part of the expenditure incurred by India in the international campaign was borne by the international organisation and what part was borne by India.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The expenditure incurred is very large. I have not got the actual proportion. I would like to have notice.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: May I know whether, after all this expenditure on this unit, there has been occasion to reduce or enlarge the strength of this organisation?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Not so much as a result of this international campaign. Probably some portion might be due to that. The personnel has been reduced as a result of lesser activity of locusts in India from 607 to 207.

Shri Kasliwal: It appears from the statement that no locust activity has been witnessed in this country last year. There are reports in the press that there was some activity in Saudi Arabia, Sudan and some places round about. May I know whether the hon. Minister is in a position to say that

there is no danger to this country from such locust activity?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: We have to watch the situation all along. For the time being, it appears that there is no immediate danger. But, I am to inform the House that some locusts are always present on the soil of India throughout. In spite of the fact that they may not be able to form swarms and do damage on a large scale, there is a huge area where locust breed of a local nature is always carried on.

Prices of Raw Jute

*140. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of raw jute in Bihar have been very low during the months of February, March and April this year;

(b) if so, the reasons for the same; and

(c) how these compare with the prices of the previous year?

The Minister of Co-operation (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Compare favourably.

Shri L. N. Mishra: In view of the fact that the prices of raw jute have often been subjected to wide fluctuations by the speculative activities of private traders, have Government considered the proposal of putting this commodity also under the sphere of the State Trading Corporation?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: That would be more for the Commerce and Industry Ministry to decide.

Shri L. N. Mishra: In view of the fact that the Ministry of Food and Agriculture had made a definite recommendation to the Jute Enquiry Commission that a minimum price for raw jute be fixed every year, may I know whether the Food and Agriculture Ministry has been pursuing this point still?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It is always the view of the Food and Agriculture Ministry that some steps should be taken to assure the jute growers a fair price. I cannot say, what ultimate view the Commerce and Industry Ministry has taken and how far we have succeeded in this.

Shri L. N. Mishra: If it is view of the Food and Agriculture Ministry that a fair price should be got by the raw jute growers, may I know why the recommendation of the Jute Enquiry Commission that a Jute Commission be set up has not materialised?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I would like to have notice.

Shri A. C. Guha: The hon. Minister has admitted that the Food and Agriculture Ministry always wants that a fair price should be fixed to ensure an economic price to the jute growers, is it not the responsibility of this Ministry to protect the jute growers' interest and if there is anything in between their desire and its fulfilment, is it not the duty of this Ministry to see that the desire is fulfilled and the growers ensured an economic price?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Firstly, my hon. friend is reading more than I said in my reply. I did not say that we have recommended any minimum price. I said it is the view of the Food and Agriculture Ministry that the grower must get a reasonable price. What particular steps will achieve this result, I did not disclose.

Shri L. N. Mishra: It is in the statement of the Ministry.

Shri S. C. Samanta: In reply to part (a), the hon. Minister said, no. May I know whether it is a fact that the growers who were selling jute at that time were selling at a lower price whereas those who bought them were selling at a higher price in Calcutta?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: There are local variations and from time to time also there are price variations. I have myself complained that very often these fluctuations are very violent and cause a lot of damage to the interests of the agriculturists, but in this particular case, the variations are not too much. For instance, in Purnea in 1956 the average price was Rs. 24-8-0, now it has gone down only by eight annas so far as February and April are concerned. In the other months it is more. That is why I said that the fluctuations are not very high in these months.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: Arising out of the answer of the Minister of Agriculture that it is the view of his Ministry that proper price should be paid to the jute growers, may I know what steps the Ministry has taken to realise that object and whether they consulted the Commerce and Industry Ministry on this point as he has said that it is the function of the Commerce and Industry Ministry?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It would not be possible for me to describe all the steps that are possible to achieve this end in reply to a question, but this is a matter to which, not only in respect of jute but all commodities produced by the agriculturists, the Food and Agriculture Ministry attaches the highest importance, as otherwise the production will never go up, but I cannot describe all the steps.

Shri Thirumal Rao: Is it not the policy of the Food and Agriculture Ministry to consult the Commerce Ministry in regard to jute which is a dollar-earning cash crop?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It is not a matter of consultation. Whenever we feel that some steps are necessary for improvement in the prices, we make a recommendation to them and they take the step.

Shri Ranga: Is it not a fact that for a number of years a minimum price was fixed by the Bengal Government—I do not know whether the Bihar Government did so or not—and it was

enforced also by the Bengal Government? They provided special funds for that purpose.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I would like to have notice of the question.

Master Plan for Delhi

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*141. { **Shri Radha Raman:**
Shri D. C. Sharma:

Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position of the Master Plan for Delhi;

(b) when the complete Plan will be presented to the Lok Sabha; and

(c) when it is proposed to be implemented?

The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarkar): (a) The Town Planning Organisation submitted an Interim General Plan for Greater Delhi in September, 1956 and the preparation of the final Master Plan is now in progress.

(b) It will be available to the Members of Parliament as soon as it is ready.

(c) The question of implementing the Plan will arise only after it has been duly scrutinised and approved by the Government.

Shri Radha Raman: The hon. Minister just now said that an interim plan was published very recently. May I know if copies of it were supplied to Members of Parliament and if they were not supplied, whether they will be supplied now?

Shri Karmarkar: I would like to make myself sure as to whether they were supplied, but so far as I can see they have not been, and in order to enable Members of Parliament to buy it, we have priced it very reasonably at two rupees and odd. The first edition is of 500 copies, and maybe it will take some time to be sold out, and the hon. Member will do well to purchase his copy.

Shri Radha Raman: In view of the fact that a master plan is being prepared by the town-planning agency, have the Government any statistics now available about the possibilities or the prospects of demolishing certain areas in the City of Delhi, including the Chandni Chowk area?

Shri Karmarkar: It looks like a very short question, but it will require a long reply.

Firstly, this question of demolition arises in urgent cases like slum clearance. It is proposed that to the extent that is possible and necessary that work should go on, pending the finalisation of this master plan.

The hon. Member wanted to know something else also.

Shri Radha Raman: Chandni Chowk.

Shri Karmarkar: About Chandni Chowk particularly, I would like to have notice.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know....

Mr. Speaker: How can a huge plan be discussed under a question? Hon. Members have got other remedies. If he is not satisfied, he may ask for a half-hour, one hour or 1½ hour discussion. In the Question Hour I am not going to allow all the time for a single question.

Bhakra Nangal Dam

*142. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state the total amount contributed towards Bhakra Nangal Dam by the two units, Punjab and Rajasthan, till the end of the First Five Year Plan and the benefits accruing to the two contributing States?

The Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri S. K. Patil): A statement giving the information is laid on the Table of Lok Sabha. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 38.]

Shri D. C. Sharma: From the statement I find that about Rs. 111 crores odd have been spent on the project so far. Have Government any idea as to the optimum amount that is to be spent on this project, and the share of the Punjab and Rajasthan Governments in this respect?

Shri S. K. Patil: As has been stated in the answer, we have already paid Rs. 1,07,46,09,851 to Punjab and Rs. 3,70,88,450 to Rajasthan. According to present calculations, the optimum expenditure is going to be about Rs. 172:54 crores. The proportion as between Punjab and Rajasthan will be about 84:78 per cent. in the case of Punjab and 15:22 per cent. in the case of Rajasthan respectively.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know when the power supply to Rajasthan will commence?

Shri S. K. Patil: So far as the supply of power is concerned, we are expecting that Rajasthan would get it within a year.

Shri Keshava: May I know whether the Central Government have made any contribution towards this project, and if so, whether the Comptroller and Auditor-General is entitled to audit the accounts of this project?

Shri S. K. Patil: The Centre has paid money; that has been stated in the answer itself. As for the second part of the question, I require notice.

Shri Punnoose: May I know the quantity of power produced in this project, and the cost of production per kw.?

Shri S. K. Patil: The power already produced is somewhere in the region of 72,000 kw. The power to be produced hereafter will be a little under 400,000 kw. As to the price per kw. I would require notice.

Shri H. C. Mathur: May I know whether the Rajasthan Government have complained of inordinate delays in the transmission of power in this case, and if so, the reasons for this delay?

Shri S. K. Patil: They have been in correspondence with us, and we have explained to them the difficulty about the availability of steel etc. But those difficulties are being slowly got over, and I think we shall be in a position to give them power within a year.

Shri Dasappa: May I know whether any moneys have been found for this project by the Rajasthan and Punjab Governments, apart from the loans which the Government of India have given?

Shri S. K. Patil: I have no information about it just now. If the hon. Member gives notice, I shall find out.

Shri Mohamed Imam: May I know the return on the total investment?

Shri S. K. Patil: It is very difficult just now to estimate what the return would be. But that is a matter to be enquired into. If notice is given, I shall supply the information.

Salem-Bangalore Railway Line

- *143 { **Shri Narasimhan:**
Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:
Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 333 on the 23rd November, 1956 and state the present position of the survey of the Salem-Bangalore Railway Line?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): The field work is in progress and is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

Shri Narasimhan: May I know whether there was a time-schedule for the completion of this survey, and if so, to what extent it was adhered to, and if not, the reasons therefor?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Generally, for these surveys, no definite time-schedule is given, because it differs from survey to survey depending on various conditions. But it is expected that the survey will be completed by the end of this month, and we hope

the report will be with the Railway Board by September.

Shri Narasimhan: May I know the stations contemplated under the survey between Dharmapuri and Salem on the one side, and Hosur and Bangalore on the other, which are now going to be in a new alignment, apart from the old alignment of the dismantled railway line between Dharmapuri and Hosur?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: It is yet too early to go into details of this nature.

Shri Dasappa: What was the result of this survey? Is there any immediate or reasonable chance of its being taken up within a reasonable period for implementation?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: The result is more or less the general result of all surveys. I might tell the hon. Member that there is not much likelihood of this line being constructed during the Second Plan period.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Is it a fact that there is a deliberate attempt to slow down this survey in view of the fact that Government are not taking up any line for construction during the Second Plan period?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: There is no attempt whatsoever to slow down the progress of the work. As I said, the work will be completed by the end of this month. But even if it had been completed earlier, there was very little likelihood of the line being constructed.

Shri Narasimhan: Are Government aware that in the Second Five Year Plan period, two big projects, aluminium and lignite, will be under way in and around this area and whether in the context of perspective planning, the proper strengthening of transport facilities between Cuddalore, Salem and Bangalore will not be necessary for the fulfilment of these two projects?

Mr. Speaker: I find that 75 per cent. of the questions that are put by

way of supplementaries are suggestions for action. If the hon. Minister gives one reply, then Members try to convert him to their own view by arguments, which ought to take place only on a resolution or a separate motion. No answer need be given to the question.

Shri Narasimhan: might explain.....

Mr. Speaker: I have been able to understand him. Next question.

Mr. Speaker: Question No. 144.

Shri Keshava: May I suggest that question No. 152 may be taken up along with question No. 144, as it relates to the same subject?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: All right.

Re-organisation of Posts and Telegraphs Circles

*144. **Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the stage at which the proposal to re-organise the Posts and Telegraphs Circles consequent upon the re-organisation of States rests;

(b) when the same is likely to be finalised; and

(c) the number of Circles in the country at present and what would be the number after re-organisation?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) to (c). There are at present thirteen P. & T. Circle Offices including the Postal Circle at Delhi. There is no proposal at present to have a general re-arrangement of Circle boundaries.

P. & T. Administrative Circle in Mysore

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*152. { **Shri Keshava:**
Shri Thimmaiah:

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state whether the Central Government have any proposals at all to constitute a Posts and Telegraphs administrative circle for Karnataka or Mysore?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): Not at present.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Am I to understand that we have given up the idea of having Circles on linguistic basis?

Shri Raj Bahadur: As a matter of fact, these Circles were never organised on the basis of any provincial boundaries; they were organised on the basis of administrative convenience, depending upon the number of post offices and telegraph offices in a particular area and the work emanating therefrom.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Is it a fact that the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs went into this question and some work was being done about it, but suddenly it was given up?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I might remove one apprehension from the mind of the hon. Member. The question was whether any proposal was under consideration. We have said that at present it is not under consideration. That does not bind us down rigidly to any particular decision. In case a new Circle is necessary on the basis of traffic or the number of post offices, we shall consider the proposition.

Shri Punnoose: Is it not a fact that during the last session of the last Parliament, it was stated in this House from the Government side that reorganisation of posts and telegraphs Circles had been under consideration on the basis of the reorganised States? If so, may I know what has happened to that?

Shri Raj Bahadur: What was stated, if I remember aright—I am speaking from memory—was that it was not necessary that the boundaries of a P. and T. Circle should be coterminous with the boundaries of a State. Maybe that in many cases two States are represented by one Circle or one single Circle represents more than one State.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know the reason for keeping the Andhra Pradesh Postal Circle still in Kurnool and not shifting it to Hyderabad?

Shri Raj Bahadur: As I said, the old boundaries of the old Circles continue at present.

Shri Keshava: By what time is the Mysore Circle likely to be constituted?

Shri Raj Bahadur: As and when the matter is taken into consideration and a decision is arrived at.

Shri Radhelal Vyasa rose—

Mr. Speaker: I cannot allow a discussion on separate Circles here. Next question.

Delhi Electricity Workers

*145. **Shri Bahadur Singh:** Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi Electricity Workers of the Distribution Branch went on strike in the middle of April, 1957;

(b) the demands put forward by them;

(c) how far have those been meted out;

(d) the average number of public complaints daily regarding the difficulties caused by the strike; and

(e) whether the supply was suspended in any area?

The Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri S. K. Patil): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Re-instatement of Shri Laxmi Narain, ex-meter reader of the Delhi

State Electricity Board who was removed from service by the Board on alleged charges of misconduct.

(c) In accordance with the agreement reached between the Delhi State Electricity Board and the Delhi State Electricity Workers Union, the case of Shri Laxmi Narain has been referred to Shri Sankar Saran, retired Judge of the Allahabad High Court for review.

(d) None.

(e) No, Sir.

Shri Bahadur Singh: May I know if the Government had spent some extra money during these strike days?

Shri S. K. Patil: I have no information on this subject except that if the occasion demanded in order that the services should not be interrupted they might have spent. If notice is given I will answer.

Thefts in Calcutta Dock Area

*147. **Shri Raghunath Singh:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state whether it is a fact that on account of the lack of co-ordination between Calcutta Port Police, Customs and Port Commissioners, theft is increasing in Calcutta Dock Area amounting to several lakhs per month?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): According to information available co-ordination is maintained between the Police, Customs and Port authorities in the matter of anti-Pilferage measures in the Port of Calcutta. An Anti-Pilferage Committee consisting of representatives of the Calcutta Import Trade Association, the Insurance Companies, the Customs, the Police and the Port Commissioners, reviews the situation once a month and the results are reported to be encouraging. The number of cases of theft in the month of February, 1957, was 86 as against 95 in November, 1956.

Shri Raghunath Singh: May I know whether 8,000 Pakistani nationals are working in this dock and is it not due to these people?

Shri Raj Bahadur: That is a matter for police investigation; I am not in a position to vouchsafe for the accuracy of the statement.

Shri Raghunath Singh: What steps are being taken to replace these foreign nationals by Indians?

Shri Raj Bahadur: May I submit, Sir, that the question pertains to the measures and steps taken by Government to control pilferage; and the question of replacement of foreign nationals by Indians is a larger question; and I think it is substantially engaging the attention of Government.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether it is a fact that last year the Port Commissioner recruited persons from the N.V.C. to cope with this theft and whether by such recruitment any results have been achieved?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I think I shall have to require notice for that.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know what steps are being taken by Government to effect co-ordination between the Police and Customs Officers due to whose negligence these thefts have taken place?

Shri Raj Bahadur: As I said, the committee which consists of representatives of the Police, the Insurance Companies, Customs Officers, Import Trade Associations and the Port Commissioners reviews the situation from month to month.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Why has a labour member not been added to this Committee?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is an administrative matter and it concerns the control of thefts and pilferages and I do not know what the hon. Member does imply.

Fair Price Shops in Kerala

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*148. { **Shri A. K. Gopalan:**
Shri A. M. Thomas:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the kind of rice—parboiled or raw—that is more popular in the State of Kerala;

(b) whether it is a fact that a major portion of the quantity available for Kerala for sale in fair price shops is raw rice; and

(c) what steps Government intend to take in this matter?

The Deputy Minister of Food (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): (a) to (c). Parboiled rice is preferred in Kerala. Only Burma exports parboiled rice where availability of this variety is reported to be limited. According to present indications, against our contract for 5 lakh tons, we are likely to get less than 2 lakh tons of boiled rice during the year. Consistent with the availability, preference is given to Kerala for supply of boiled rice.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I know the amount that is required for Kerala for the next 7 months and what the Government is proposing to supply to Kerala?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): I have had a full discussion with the Chief Minister of Kerala and also the Food Minister and it has been agreed between us that we will be supplying 75,000 tons of rice during the next 3 months, that is, June, July and August, after which the next crop will come in.

The stocks of rice at present in Kerala are raw rice; but we are expecting some parboiled rice and we hope to supply them about 30,000 or 40,000 tons of parboiled rice.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: What is the difference between the price of rice sold at the fair price shop and that sold in the free market?

Shri A. P. Jain: The price of boiled rice in the free market is appreciably higher than that in the fair price shops.

Shri Punnoose: Is it not a fact that the paddy that is harvested just now in the Andhra Pradesh is to be mainly diverted for use as boiled rice and if so, could Government do anything to get that rice for Kerala at a reasonable price?

Shri A. P. Jain: The Kerala traders are at liberty to buy this in the open market. What I was talking of was the imported rice from Burma.

Opening of New Stations

*149. **Shri Bishwa Nath Roy:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether in view of the great distance between Bhatni Junction station and Bhatpar Rani and between Bhatni and Salimpur railway stations any proposal is under consideration for construction of new stations?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): It is proposed to open a crossing station each between Bhatni Junction and Bhatpar Rani, and between Bhatni Junction and Salimpur with a view to increasing the line capacity.

It is also proposed to open these crossing stations for passenger booking shortly after they have been provided.

Shri Biswa Nath Roy: May I know when the construction work would start?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: One crossing station between Bhatni and Salimpur is nearing completion and it is expected that it will be thrown open for goods traffic by July and for passengers, by September, 1957. The other one is included in the programme for the year 1957-58.

Shri Biswanath Roy: May I know when the other one, between Bhatni and Bhatpar Rani, will be completed.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: We hope to complete it soon.

Pandit D. N. Tiwary: I want to put one question.

Mr. Speaker: For a small crossing between two stations, we cannot spend so much of our time. If necessary, the hon. Members will kindly write to the Minister and get the information.

गांवों में बिजली लगाना

*१५०. श्री भक्त दर्शन : क्या सिंचाई और विद्युत् मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि देश भर के गांवों और छोटे नगरों में बिजली लगाने की एक व्यापक योजना को कार्यान्वित किया जा रहा है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उस योजना की मोटी रूप-रेखा क्या है; और

(ग) उसे कार्यान्वित करने की दिशा में अब तक क्या प्रगति हुई है ?

सिंचाई तथा विद्युत् मंत्री (श्री स० का० पाटिल) : (क) से (ग) विवरण सभा-पटल पर रख दिया गया है । [बैलिये परिशिष्ट १, अनुबन्ध संख्या ३६]

श्री भक्त दर्शन : इस विवरण से ज्ञात होता है कि इस द्वितीय पंचवर्षीय योजना में ७५ करोड़ रुपये इस कार्य के लिये रखे गये हैं और पहले वर्ष में २१७६ क्षेत्रों में विद्युतीकरण होगा । क्या गवर्नमेंट के ध्यान में यह बात आयी है कि इस कार्यक्रम के बावजूद भी बहुत से इलाके ऐसे हैं, जैसे कि उत्तर प्रदेश का गढ़वाल और टेहरी गढ़वाल का इलाका जहाँ कि अभी तक बिजली का एक बल्ब भी नहीं दिया गया है ? क्या इस प्रकार के पिछड़े हुए इलाकों की ओर विशेष ध्यान दिया जायेगा ?

श्री स० का० पाटिल : हमारे पास जो योजनायें प्राती हैं वे स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स के पास स प्राती हैं । इस प्रश्न पर पहले स्टेट गवर्नमेंट को विचार करना चाहिये उस के बाद गवर्नमेंट आफ इंडिया उस पर विचार कर सकती है ।

श्री भक्त हर्षोदय : क्या गवर्नमेंट के व्याप में वह बाल धायी है कि जिन नगरों में कैटोन-मेंट है वे प्रतिरक्षा मंत्रालय के धन्तर्गत हैं और वहाँ राज्य सरकारें अपनी बिजली की योजनाओं को लागू नहीं कर पा रही हैं क्योंकि रक्षा मंत्रालय की धोर से अड़चने पैदा की जाती हैं। क्या इस कठिनाई को दूर करने के लिये कोई मार्ग निकाला जायेगा ताकि उन क्षेत्रों में भी कार्य हो सके ?

श्री स० का० पाटिल : जरूर, जब यह चाप हमारे सामने धायेगी तो उस का मार्ग निकाला जायेगा ।

Shri L. N. Mishra: The First Plan has suggested the setting up of some body like the Rural Electrical Administration of the United States to provide long-term credit to village co-operatives for rural electrification purposes. May I know whether there is any proposal to have that kind of a body during the Second Plan at least?

Shri S. K. Patil: I would require notice. But, so far as the First Plan is concerned, even the Rs. 20 crores that were set apart were not fully spent. As regards the second part of the question, viz., whether the setting up of such a body is under consideration I would require notice.

Shri M. R. Krishna: May I know whether any assistance is being given to Harijan colonies and the backward classes colonies which have been constructed by the Harijans themselves and if so, what amount has been released to Andhra Pradesh?

Shri S. K. Patil: So far as Harijan colonies or any particular localities are concerned, it is the business of the State Governments. As between us and the State Governments, we examine those schemes and make allotments. So far as this particular question is concerned, it is not with us; it is more with the State Governments. So far as allotment to Andhra is concerned, I do not find the figures here, but Andhra is quite high up in the work that has already been done; in

144 villages this scheme has already gone.

Shri Shivananjappa: May I know how many villages were electrified during the First Plan period?

Shri S. K. Patil: 2179 villages were electrified.

Shri Heda: Formerly, there was a policy that the rural areas where the big hydro-electric projects are working would be given some quota out of the power generated there. But, looking at the things that have been done—for example, the whole power generated by the Nizam Sagar hydro-electric project is being transferred to the city and no quota is being given to the rural areas—may I know whether the Government have abandoned the policy they were pursuing, or do they propose to follow it in some other way?

Shri S. K. Patil: We have abandoned nothing. As I said in answer to another question, this is a matter for the State Government to take the initiative and find out if there is anything that has further to be considered between them and us. If the matter is referred to us, surely we will do it.

Shrimati Ha Palchoudhuri: May I know the cost of electricity in rural areas as compared to urban areas, and what steps the Government have taken to lessen the price of electricity in rural areas?

Shri S. K. Patil: I will surely require notice for answering such a highly technical question.

Shri Supakar: May I know the State-wise allocation of money regarding rural electrification?

Shri S. K. Patil: I have not got here the State-wise allocation, but I have got here as to how many villages per State have already been electrified. If the hon. Member wants to know the allocation I can give the information, but that again will depend, as I said while answering the main question, upon the State, the availability of power and many other

things that are necessary. Even in this distribution hon. Members will find that some States have taken full advantage of it while others have not because circumstances differed in those States.

श्री नवल प्रभाकर: इस सम्बन्ध में केन्द्रीय-प्रशासित क्षेत्रों में सरकार की क्या नीति है ?

Shri S. K. Patil: I think that is a responsibility of the Government of India, and we consider it on that footing.

Madras Dock Labour Board

*151. Shri Tangamani: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Port-Workers under the Board of Trustees, Madras Port have been demanding of the Government of India, the early appointment of a Wage-Board; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications

(Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) and (b). The demand was not for the appointment of a Wage-Board as such but for the upward revision of the pay scales of Class III and Class IV employees. The demand was sponsored by the All India Port and Dock Workers Federation and related to such classes of employees in all the Major Ports of India. Government did not feel justified in undertaking a revision of the basic wage but recognised the need for a review of the disparities and anomalies in the pay scales, allowances, holidays, leave rules, working hours, overtime, provident fund, retiring gratuity and other conditions of service of Class III and Class IV employees at all the Major Ports to see how far rationalisation and uniformity could be evolved. This review is being carried out by an Officer on Special Duty. His recommendations are expected to be received shortly.

Shri Tangamani: In view of the fact that the Officer, who has been

appointed, has been going only into the question of anomalies and rationalisation of wage scales for class III and class IV employees, and in view of the fact that there has been no wage revision since 1st October, 1953, will the hon. Minister be pleased to say whether there will be another Wage Board set up, taking into consideration the fact that many Wage Boards are being set up in other industries?

Shri Raj Bahadur: May I in this connection invite the attention of the hon. Member to a Press Note which I issued after a meeting of the representatives of the Government with the Federation concerned and which says that this Officer's enquiry will be to secure as large a measure of uniformity as possible in the service conditions of all these classes of employees in all the major ports? I think, by and large, what is now mentioned by the hon. Member is covered.

Shri Tangamani: There have been repeated demands from the five major ports of Calcutta, Madras, Vizag and Cochin that a wage board must be set up and repeatedly the answer given by the Government is that it will affect the other Central Government employees in view of the recommendations of the first Pay Commission...

Mr. Speaker: That is all right. What is it that the hon. Member wants from the Government?

An Hon. Member: Wage board!

Mr. Speaker: The Question Hour must be devoted for eliciting information which is not available in printed books and not known to the hon. Members. No arguments, resolutions, suggestions, etc. ought to be made.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: May I know whether the officer appointed to enquire into the anomalies of the wage structure has submitted an interim report?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I do not think he has submitted an interim report, but, he has met the representatives of the various organisations of the workers.

स्टेशनों पर शिकायत पुस्तकें

१५४. श्री अमर सिंह डामर क्या रेलवे मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या इस सम्बन्ध में कोई शिकायतें प्राप्त हुई हैं कि रतलाम डिवीजन और नई दिल्ली स्टेशन के कुछ स्टेशन मास्टर और प्रिन्सिपल स्टेशन मास्टर सच्ची शिकायतों को दर्ज करने के लिये शिकायत पुस्तकें देने से इन्कार करते हैं; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इन सम्बन्ध में क्या कार्यवाही की गई है ?

रेलवे उपमंत्री (श्री शाहनवाज खां) :

(क) ३१-३-५७ को जो साल खत्म हुआ, उस में इस तरह की ६ शिकायतें रतलाम डिवीजन में और एक शिकायत नयी दिल्ली स्टेशन पर मिली है ।

(ख) इन सब शिकायतों की जांच की गयी ।

रतलाम डिवीजन की ४ शिकायतें सही साबित हुई और कर्मचारियों के खिलाफ अनुशासन की कार्यवाही की गयी है ।

नयी दिल्ली स्टेशन की शिकायत भी सही साबित हुई है और संबंधित कर्मचारियों के खिलाफ अनुशासन की कार्यवाही की जा रही है ।

Shri B. S. Murthy: The English answer may also be read.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: (a) During the one year period ended 31-3-57, 9 such complaints on the Ratlam Division and 1 at New Delhi were received.

(b) All the complaints were enquired into.

4 complaints on the Ratlam Division were substantiated and disciplinary action against the staff has been taken.

The complaint relating to New Delhi has also been substantiated and dis-

ciplinary action against the staff concerned is being taken.

श्री अमर सिंह डामर : क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि रतलाम में जिन कर्मचारियों के खिलाफ अनुशासन को कार्रवाई की गई, उसका नतीजा क्या निकला ?

श्री शाहनवाज खां : उनके खिलाफ अनुशासन की कार्रवाई की गई ।

Shri Radha Raman: What is the nature of the disciplinary action taken?

Mr. Speaker: In Delhi or Ratlam?

Shri Radha Raman: The hon. Minister has said about Ratlam.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: They have been dealt with in accordance with the rules of discipline laid down for dealing with railway staff who commit such mistakes.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has not asked the hon. Minister to tell him under what rules of procedure was action taken; he wants to know the effect of the action, whether any punishment was given and if so what.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I require notice.

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): They have been at present censured. But it has been felt that this punishment is a mild one and the attention of the railway has been drawn towards that.

'Jal Ballabh'

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*155. { **Shri M. R. Krishna:**
Shri Bibhuti Mishra:

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Indian Cargo ship 'Jal Ballabh' was damaged in Suez due to fire;

(b) if so, the extent of damage caused to the ship;

(c) the amount that has to be spent to overhaul this ship;

(d) whether there was any loss of human life; and

(e) if so, whether the deceased were all Indian Nationals?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). Not known at present. A detailed report from the Marine Superintendent of the Scindia Steam Navigation Co., who has flown to Suez, is being awaited.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

Shri M. R. Krishna: May I know the cause of this fire and also whether the ship and the articles she was carrying have been insured and if so, whether they were insured in an Indian firm or foreign firm?

Shri Raj Bahadur: According to the usual practice, both the cargo and the ship must have been covered by the insurance. As regards the cargo, I am told that it carried cotton loaded at Port Sudan. As regards the cause of the fire, I cannot say anything about it nor can I prejudice the results of any enquiry which may be initiated in this matter.

Shri M. R. Krishna: May I know whether this ship will be repaired at the Vizag shipyard or some foreign shipyard?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It was only temporarily incapacitated and it was attended to right in the Suez itself; it was refloated after three days on 28th April. It reached its destination also and is coming back.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: The hon. Minister has said that the Marine Superintendent of Scindia has gone there. May I know why the Principal Marine Officer of the Government of India has not gone there for enquiry?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The Government steps in on account of the Indian Merchants Shipping Act only when the

casualty is reported. That will be reported when the ship comes back home.

लक्ष्मीदेवी चीनी मिल, छितीली

* १५६. श्री विभूति मिश्र : क्या सच

तथ्य: कृपे मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि लक्ष्मीदेवी चीनी मिल, छितीली (उत्तर प्रदेश) में काम करने वाले मजदूरों ने इस साल जनवरी और फरवरी के महीनों में हड़ताल की थी; और

(ख) यदि हाँ, तो इस के क्या कारण थे ?

श्री सच तथा कृषि मंत्र: (शं: अ० प्र० जैन) : (क) और (ख). पृथ्वी हुई जानकारी का एक विवरण जो उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार से प्राप्त हुआ है सभा की टेबिल पर रख दिया गया है। [श्रीसच परीक्षित १, अनुबन्ध संख्या ४०]

श्री विभूति मिश्र : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जहाँ मिलों में मजदूर इस तरह की हड़तालें किया करते हैं और किसानों का गन्ना पड़ा रह जाता है और काफी समय लग जाता है और जिस के कि कारण उन का नुकसान होता है, तो क्या फूड एंड एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्ट्री कोई ऐसा इंतजाम करती है कि मजदूरों, किसानों और मिलमालिकों का कोई एक संगठन हो ताकि इस तरह की हड़तालें न हों ?

श्री अ० प्र० जैन : हड़ताल का रोकना तो फूड एंड एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्ट्री के हाथ में है नहीं, हाँ गन्ने का ठीक इंतजाम कर देना एक हदतक जरूर हमारे हाथ में है और जब यहाँ पर हड़ताल हुई तो गन्ने को घासपास के दूसरे ६ कारखानों में दे दिया गया और उन्हीं ने इस गन्ने को पेटा।

श्री विभूति मिश्र : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि छितीली चीनी मिल जो कि बिहार के बनहा थाने के करीब पड़ती है और जहाँ कि किसानों का, हड़ताल होने के कारण, ३ लाख

मन गन्ना खराब हो गया है, उस के वास्ते सरकार को कोई इंतजाम करना चाहिये था या नहीं ?

श्री अ० प्र० जंन : वहाँ कोई गन्ना खराब नहीं हुआ है ।

श्री बिभूति मिश्र : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या हमारे मंत्री महोदय ने धनहा थाने में पड़ने वाले गांवों की बाबत जो कि छितीली सुगर मिल को गन्ना देते हैं, कोई जांच पड़ताल की है या जांच पड़ताल करना चाहते हैं ।

श्री अ० प्र० जंन : इस की बाबत उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार से हम ने रिपोर्ट मांगी थी और उन्होंने ने हम को यह लिखा है कि जिस वक्त मिल के भन्दर हड़ताल हो गई तो उस गन्ने को दूसरे कारखानों को दे दिया गया और कोई गन्ना खराब नहीं गया । यह मैं उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की इत्तिला के ऊपर बता रहा हूँ ।

श्री बिभूति मिश्र : छितीली मिल में हड़ताल हो जाने से धनहा थाने के किसानों का गन्ना पड़ा रह गया और नहीं जा सका और करीब २, ३ लाख मन गन्ना नष्ट हो गया....

Mr. Speaker, The hon. Member is giving information.

श्री राधेश, ल व्यास : क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि जो गन्ने के सम्बन्ध में बिहार में स्थिति है वह दूसरे राज्यों में भी है, जैसे कि मध्य प्रदेश में है और वहाँ पर भाँ किसानों का गन्ना सूख गया और कारखाने वालों ने उस को नहीं खरोदा, तो उस के लिये सरकार क्या सोच रही है तार्कि यह गन्ना बेकार न जाये और उस को मिल वाले ले सकें ?

श्री अ० प्र० जंन : हमारे पास तो ऐसी कोई इत्तिला नहीं है, सब कारखाने चल रहे हैं, बिहार के भन्दर भी और मध्य प्रदेश के भन्दर भी, और गन्ने को पेरा जा रहा है ।

Shri Shree Narayan Das: May I know whether the hon. Minister's attention has been drawn to the fact that in spite of the fact that some of the

mills are going to be kept working a large area of sugarcane crop will remain standing and whether the hon. Minister will take steps, in consultation with the State Governments concerned, to see that the standing sugarcane crop is completely crushed?

Shri A. P. Jain: The apprehension of the hon. Member that any cane will be left uncrushed is unfounded. About 6 per cent. of the cane was left in the fields in Uttar Pradesh, and I think about 6, 7 or 8 per cent. in Bihar. Arrangements have been made either to transfer that cane to other mills for crushing or the mills themselves will prolong the period of crushing. My information is that almost all the mills this year will close about the end of the month and there will be no sugarcane left standing in the field.

Bombay-Kanya Kumari National Highway

*157. Shri A. K. Gopalan: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made on the Bombay-Kanya Kumari National Highway;

(b) whether it is a fact that the construction of the bridge at Kariyan Kodi has been suspended; and

(c) if so, the reason thereof?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) A statement showing the progress on the Bombay Kanya Kumari road which is not a National Highway, is laid on the Table of Lok Sabha. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 41.]

(b) and (c). The work was suspended for some time for revising the design of the bridge with a view to overcome some foundation difficulties which came to light during execution. The work has since been restarted.

12 00 hrs.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I know when the work will be restarted as far as this bridge is concerned?

Shri Raj Bahadar: The work has been re-started.

Mr. Speaker: The Question Hour is over.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Steps to prevent spread of Influenza to India.

S. N. Q. No. 3. { [†] Shri V. P. Nayar:
Shri Easwara Iyer:

Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Influenza is raging in an epidemic form in Singapore and Malaya;

(b) whether adequate steps have been taken by the Government of India to prevent the spread of infection to India, through the passengers from the regions of the epidemic; and

(c) if so, the steps taken in the matter?

The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Influenza is in an epidemic form in Singapore and Malaya.

(b) and (c). The Government of India have taken steps to prevent the entry of infection to India. The steps taken are as follows:—

1. The Directors of Health Services in the States were alerted and asked to take necessary measures to deal with influenza cases.

2. Officers were deputed to Bombay, Calcutta and Madras to study the situation in ports and to act in close liaison with the State authorities to prevent the entry and spread of the disease.

3. All airport and seaport health authorities were ordered to quarantine and isolate passengers arriving from abroad and who were suffering from influenza. Passengers not suffering from the disease were to be given surveillance forms and asked to

report to the nearest medical authority for a period of five days after entry into India. The names of the passengers with their addresses were also ordered to be sent to the nearest medical authorities.

4. Influenza has been declared as an infectious disease under the Indian Port Health and the Indian (Aircraft) Public Health Rules.

5. One ship from Singapore, S. S. Rajula, with about 1,600 passengers and 200 crew arrived in Madras at 1 A.M. on the 16th May 1957. The Government of India have taken steps to place this ship under quarantine and to prevent its entry into Madras Port. 44 cases of active influenza were on board the ship on its arrival. A team of 30 medical officers and 70 other health personnel totalling about 100 people boarded the ship immediately after its arrival and rendered all medical assistance. Measures for treating cases and isolating them on board the ship have been taken. Steps have also been taken to supply the passengers with food and water.

6. Arrangements have been made for the evacuation of cases which are acutely ill and which require special attention not available on board the ship.

7. Arrangements have been made with the Pasteur Institute, Coonoor, to isolate the virus from the infected cases in India and possible steps have been taken for producing on a small scale a vaccine against the actual virus. It is estimated that it will take about four weeks to produce about 1,000 doses of influenza vaccine from this strain of virus.

I should also like to add, to bring the information up-to-date, that we have received a report as of yesterday that the position after 19th May, 1957 was that about 79 cases of influenza were on board the ship, that 17 new cases occurred on 19th May and that three doctors and seven nurses of the medical team who went to render medical aid have also contracted the disease. Arrangements have

been made to isolate them. I hope the best sympathies of the House are with them.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether any steps were taken to prevent the spread of the disease at the port where the ship, S. S. Rajula, called before it came to Madras?

Shri Karmarkar: Yes, due steps were taken in the ship itself for the treatment of the patients on board the ship.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know in regard to the medical personnel who went to administer some drugs in S. S. Rajula and who on return were reported to be sick, whether Government have taken any steps to prevent further infection from the doctors who went and contacted the disease?

Shri Karmarkar: Those that have been suffering from the disease have been isolated, and we cannot wait to have them immunised before sufficient treatment is given. I should say we deeply appreciate the efforts of those people who at personal risk continued to go there very willingly.

Shri Easwara Iyer: In the case of the Influenza reported, may I know whether any secondary diseases like bronchitis, synocytis or pneumonia have also been reported and, if so, what steps have been taken to prevent them?

Shri Karmarkar: No further developments like bronchitis, etc. have been noticed. Now, the incidence of the actual suffering is supposed to cover four or five days. The person is supposed to develop a headache and then suffer from temperature of 100 degrees and then in about four or five days he recovers.

Shri V. P. Nayar: It has also been reported in the press that there is some mortality in the disease as it rages in the east. I want to know whether the Government have any information whether the disease is prevailing there in the epidemic form or pandemic form and whether the Government has been successful in isolating the virus

which causes this particular type of influenza?

Shri Karmarkar: We have given instructions to isolate the virus and prepare a vaccine as against future possibilities. Regarding actual deaths, our information shows that the epidemic originated in Japan and from October to March the number of fatal cases reported is 1,500.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether passengers coming by air from these areas have been kept under quarantine and for how long?

Shri Karmarkar: Instructions have been given regarding air passengers also. The hon. Member will be glad to hear that till now no cases of quarantine have been reported. We do not propose to interfere with *en route* passengers.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Tuticorin Express Accident

*146. **Shri Sadhan Gupta:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 62 on the 25th March, 1957 and state which of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Tuticorin Express Accident have been accepted by Government and the action taken thereon?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): A statement showing the recommendations made by the Commission and the directive issued to the Railways in connection therewith is placed on the Table of Lok Sabha. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 42].

Import of Locomotives

*153. **Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state the number of locomotives imported from foreign countries during 1956-57?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): 431.