

item published in the "Indian Nation" Patna edition of the 19th October, 1957 regarding the rude and undignified behaviour of a Postal Official of Muzafferpur with a Press correspondent;

(b) whether any enquiry has been made in the matter; and

(c) if so, the result thereof?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes

(c) The conversations being on the Telephone, it is difficult to establish the nature of conversations that took place. Action is, however, being taken against those responsible for the delay to traffic and for not dealing with the correspondents tactfully.

Sale of Potatoes in Himachal Pradesh

1494. Shri Y. S. Parmar: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the growers of seed potatoes in Himachal Pradesh who had sold their potatoes through the Co-operative Societies at flat rate in 1954-55 and 1955-56 have not yet been paid the balance;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Himachal Pradesh Administration has not paid the subsidy to the Mahasu District Co-operative Association, sanctioned by the Himachal Pradesh Government;

(c) whether it is a fact that the non-payment of money concerning the flat rate has been greatly resented by the growers and they have refused to sell their potatoes through the Co-operative Societies;

(d) whether there has been a marked decrease in the supply of seed potatoes through the Co-operative Societies; and

(e) if so, the sale through the Co-operative Societies in the current year as compared to the last 4 years?

The Minister of Cooperation (Dr. r. S. Deshmukh): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The subsidy has not been paid as it was sanctioned by the late Ministry of Himachal Pradesh Administration without obtaining the prior approval of the Central Government. The relevant papers were destroyed in the fire in the Himachal Pradesh Secretariat and the Administration have reconstructed the file and taken up the matter with the Central Government.

(c) No general complaint was received by the Administration and the Cooperative Members are marketing their potatoes through the Cooperative Societies.

(d) Yes, Sir; the decrease in the supply of seed potatoes through the Cooperative Societies has been due to:—

(i) the non-enforcement of the Control Order during 1955 and 1956;

(ii) unhealthy competition between the Cooperatives and the individual traders.

The latter did not adhere to any standards of grading and varietal purity and as such sold the potatoes at lower rates compared with the Cooperatives who insisted on maintaining those standards and suffered losses.

(e) The sale through the Cooperative Societies in the current year as compared to the last 4 years is as under:—

1953	2,40,592 bags
1954	2,12,771 bags
1955	1,19,029 bags
1956	34,211 bags
1957	40,000 bags