

connected to 36 stations. Stations connected by the coaxial systems, the Electrification systems, and the open-wire routes with aluminium/copper-weld conductors are working well; difficulty is experienced in respect of the routes connecting Varanasi with Ballia, Ghazipur, and Azamgarh, on account of repeated thefts of copper wire.

(b) and (c). Estimates have been sanctioned for the replacement of the existing copper-wire by Aluminium conductors for all the affected routes. Orders for 1,20,000 km. of Aluminium conductors have been placed. When supplies are received, aluminium wire will be allotted to the above routes.

Price Fixation of Fine Cloth and Yarn

2956 SHRI R. P. YADAV : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration before Government to fix the price of fine cloth and yarn keeping in view of the consumer interest in the matter; and

(b) the present procedure in fixing the price and marketing the cloth and what changes are being considered in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) The procedure for fixing prices of controlled cloth has been laid down in the Ministry of Commerce Resolution No. 1(15) Tax (I)/66—Tax (A), dated 15-5-1969, published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part-I, Section I, dated 15-5-1969. The controlled cloth is marketed through usual commercial channels. The question of increasing the prices of controlled cloth which were fixed with effect from 2nd May, 1968 has been referred to the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices and the matter will be considered on receipt of their report.

Extra Departmental Branch Post Office

2957. SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to demand non-returnable contribution for the cost of running Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices from the members of the public whenever any proposals for the opening of such offices in new areas are made ;

(b) the principles on which the quantum of non-returnable contribution is determined and charged ; and

(c) the exceptions to these set Principles ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA) : (a) Post Offices are opened in rural areas if certain departmental standards like distance of the nearest existing post office from the proposed post office, population to be served and a minimum anticipated income of the proposed office are satisfied and they work within certain permissible limits of loss. A non-returnable contribution is recovered from the interested parties for opening of a post office in their area only when the proposed post office is likely to work at a loss higher than the limits fixed by the Government. The policy adopted in the opening of new post offices is as indicated in the statement.

(b) In cases where a post office is justified according to the departmental standards excepting that it is anticipated to work at a loss higher than the permissible limit, the amount of non-returnable contribution is equal to the amount of loss above the permissible limit. In case the parent office also works at a loss higher than the permissible limit of Rs. 500 per annum as a result of opening of this office the amount of extra loss above Rs. 500 in respect of the parent office is also recovered as a non-returnable contribution.

In cases where opening of a post office is not justified according to departmental standards, the amount of non-returnable contribution is equal to the entire anticipated loss of the proposed office without allowing any benefit of permissible limit as well as the entire amount of loss of income of the parent office anticipated as a result of the opening the proposed office without allowing the permissible limit of Rs. 500.

The amount of non-returnable contribution is however limited to the actual cost