

(a) under whose ownership and control the Delhi tram services are being run now;

(b) what is the financial position of this system; and

(c) whether there is any proposal for rehabilitation or complete abolition of these services?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) The Tram services in Delhi are managed as one of the wings of the Delhi Transport Undertaking, which is a part of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi.

(b) The Tramway service in Delhi has been running in a loss due to the fact that the carriages and the overhead equipment are very old and the traffic conditions in the city are difficult. The net loss during the financial years 1960-61 and 1961-62 was Rs. 2,43,604/- and Rs. 3,23,000/- respectively.

(c) It has been decided to completely abolish the system by a phased programme.

Prices of Timber in Andaman Islands

1464. Shrimati Savitri Nigam: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of sawn timber for local sale have been revised by the Forest Department, Andaman Islands, with effect from 1st April, 1962;

(b) whether it is a fact that in certain cases prices have been increased by more than 50% (as for Tmpeing, Black Chuglam, Pynma etc.); and

(c) the justification for such a drastic increase in prices of timber for local sale only, when there is no increase in the sale-prices of those woods in Calcutta/Madras markets?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): (a) and (b). A statement showing the increase in prices of certain species of timber is

laid on the Table. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 68]. The increase varies between 20 to 25% except in the case of Silver Grey which is an Ornamental wood. The classification "Superior hardwood" which was current upto 31-3-1962 has now been split up into two groups viz. "Superior hardwood—'A' Grade" and "Superior hardwood 'B' Grade". The Superior hardwood 'B' Grade includes timber which are of better quality and the price of this timber has been increased as indicated above.

(c) Up to 31-3-1962 "Standard hardwood" was sold as a mixture of different species including the better species but people always preferred to buy only superior species due to their being more durable and of better quality. The prices have been increased in order to prevent the use of different types of hardwoods for purposes other than that for which they are specially intended. Besides, the cost of production of sawn timber during 1960-61 had gone up by about Rs. 15/- per ton as compared to the previous year and this factor was also taken into consideration while increasing the prices of better species.

The Silver Grey which is an Ornamental timber has always fetched high prices in auctions and there is a great demand for it. Hence, the price increase has been more in this case than the others. The Andamans Forest Department is run on a commercial basis.

The timber is sold at the depots in the mainland not at fixed price but by open auction.

Insurance Scheme for Agricultural Crops

1465. Shri M. L. Jadhav: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered—the proposal to introduce insurance scheme for agricultural crops;

(b) when Government are likely to introduce the Scheme; and

(c) what is likely to be the nature of the scheme?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh) (a) to (c). The Punjab Government intend to introduce a pilot scheme for crop insurance in that State. Details of the scheme are being worked out by them and the final scheme has not so far been received by the Government of India. It is not possible to say at this stage when the scheme would be introduced.

Time Scale clerks and R.M.S. Sorters

1466. { Shri Buta Singh:
Shri Gulshan:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that time scale clerks and R.M.S. sorters of the P. & T. department are required to pass written and oral tests before they are confirmed;

(b) whether it is also a fact that failure to pass the above tests renders these employees liable for termination of their services reversion to lower grade if they happen to be direct recruit/departmental promotees; and

(c) if so, the total number of such employees (i) whose services have been terminated (ii) who have been reverted to lower grade and (iii) number of Scheduled Castes employees affected in both cases, in the years 1960 and 1961, in all the P. & T. Circles?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri Jagjivan Ram):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes. However, in the case of direct recruits, alternative posts in lower grades are offered before their services are terminated. Time-scale clerks and sorters who could not pass the confirmation test within the permissible number of chances and have completed at least 5 years' satisfactory

service in their grade on or before the 12th October, 1961 are as a matter of concession being exempted from the confirmation test if their work and conduct is adjudged as satisfactory. The whole question is being reviewed and in the meantime instructions have been issued that officials should not be reverted or discharged from service for their failure to qualify in the confirmation test.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Welfare Inspectors

1467. { Shri Buta Singh:
Shri Gulshan:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that several posts of Welfare Inspectors and Upper Division Clerks have been created in different P. & T. Circles and Other Units under them since 1957 upto date; and

(b) if so, the total number of posts sanctioned in each P. & T. Circle and the number of posts reserved for the members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the above categories?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri Jagjivan Ram):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The posts will not be filled up centrally. No reservation of any quota is feasible for the posts of Welfare Inspectors because only one post will be filled up in each Circle for the present on the recommendation of Departmental Promotion Committees. The question of the practicability of having the quota on an overall basis is being examined. The posts of Upper Division Clerks were filled up on the basis of—

(i) Direct recruitment.

(ii) Promotion from Lower Division on the basis of a compe-