

India have not so far made any purchase at commercial prices of rice and ragi during the current *kharif* season nor is any such purchase contemplated during the remaining part of the season.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Postage rates for Newspapers

554. SHRI LOBO PRABHU:
SHRI YASHPAL SINGH:
SHRI SEZHIYAN:
SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY:
SHRI Y. A. PRASAD:
SHRI DEORAO PATIL:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA VEER-
APPA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a sample survey of a number of newspapers has been conducted after the introduction of higher postal rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action which Government have taken on the recommendations of the Southern Zone Ministers of Public Information that the postage rates on newspapers should be reduced; and

(d) whether Government propose to tax light in order to earn the paltry difference by revising the Postal Rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING, AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SHER SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir, a sample survey of number of newspapers transmitted by post has been conducted.

(b) A statement showing the number of newspapers transmitted by post during one week in August in each of last five years is laid on the Table of the House. (*Placed in Library. See No. LT—59/69.*) The postage rates for newspapers were revised with effect from 15th May, 1968. It would be seen from the statement that the August, 1968 enumeration figures do not reveal any significant fall in the number of newspapers transmitted by post.

(c) The recommendation has been received on 17-2-69 and is being examined.

(d) No, Sir, the postage rate is not a tax, but a fee to cover the cost of the service rendered by the P&T Department.

Retrenchment of Workers in Manipur P.W.D.

555. SHRI M. MEGHACHANDRA:
Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether an application for reference to Tribunal was received from two Manipur P.W.D. Workers' organisations on the issue of retrenchment of nearly 400 workers from the Manipur P.W.D.;

(b) if so, the action taken thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay in referring the dispute to the Tribunal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Minimum Income Limit For Scholarships for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

556. SHRI S. M. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL WELFARE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government has decided to fix the minimum income limit of Rs. 5,000 instead of Rs. 3,600 annual income limit for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to get freeships and scholarships; and

(b) if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE (DR. (SHRIMATI) PHULRENU GUHA): (a) and (b). The maximum income limit already prescribed is Rs. 6,000/- per annum.