

(ख) तुलनात्मक अध्ययनों से पता चला है कि मरूभूमि बढ़ रही है परन्तु विशेष रूप से यह कहना संभव नहीं है कि यह पिछले पांच सालों में बढ़ी है ।

Floods in North Bihar

728. **Shri Shree Narayan Das:** Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the waters of river Kosi and its tributaries and other rivers of North Bihar have swept across an area of over 300 sq. miles in the districts of Darbhanga and Saharsa;

(b) if so, the number of villages and population affected;

(c) the extent of damage to crops; and

(d) whether any, and if so, what steps have been taken to protect the embankments constructed so far in those areas from being washed away?

The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of Lok Sabha as soon as possible.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

INTERIM REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION

The Minister of Finance (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the interim Report on the activities of the Life Insurance Corporation of India. [Placed in Library. See No. S-198/57].

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS RULES

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): Sir, I beg to relay on the Table, under Section 10 of the National Highways Act, 1956, a copy of the National Highways Rules, 1957, published in the Notification No. S.R.O. 1182, dated the 13th April, 1957. [Placed in Library. see No. S-199/57.]

ANNUAL REPORT OF EMPLOYEES STATE INSURANCE CORPORATION

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Employment and Planning (Shri L. N. Mishra): Sir, on behalf of Shri Abid Ali, I beg to lay on the Table, under Section 36 of the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948, a copy of the Annual Report of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation along with the Audited Accounts of the Corporation for the year 1954-55. [Placed in Library. See No. S-200/57.]

Shri Prabhat Kar (Hooghly): May I ask why this report has come so late? It is for the year 1954-55; we are now at the fog end of 1957.

Shri L. N. Mishra: I am not aware of it; I will find out and inform the hon. Member.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

PRESS COMMENTS: RE: PATASKAR REPORT

Shri Viswanatha Reddy (Rajampet): Sir, under rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

"The Press comments regarding the Pataskar Report dealing with the Border problems of Andhra and Madras."

The Minister of Home Affairs (Pandit G. B. Pant): Sir, I received the report on the border dispute between Andhra Pradesh and Madras from Shri Pataskar in the last week of July. Soon after the arrival of the report, I sent a copy of the report to the Chief Minister of Andhra and another to the Chief Minister of Madras. I have received a sort of an interim reply only from one of the two Chief Ministers. I await fuller communications from them and am not in a position to say more about it today.