

(b) and (c) Government is aware that the Small Scale Industries Corporations are finding it difficult to meet the requirements of their units, particularly in the case of iron and steel items which are in short supply. There have also been transport bottlenecks which the Railways are trying to solve. The producers have been asked to pay special attention to the needs of these Corporations, Periodical meetings are also held with the representatives of the Corporations. As a result of these measures, the despatches to the Corporations have been considerably stepped up as compared to the previous years. It has further been decided that supplies to small scale units through the Small Scale Industries Corporations would be at a price less than the Stockyard Price by Rs. 40/- per tonne.

Opening of new post offices in villages

480. SHRI P. K. KUNJACHEN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of posts of different categories which will be required for the 5000 post offices proposed to be opened in villages during the year 1978-79; and

(b) whether these posts would be regular or extra departmental posts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEO SAI): (a) and (b) 5000 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices are proposed to be opened during the year 1978-79. These will be manned by 5000 Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters.

In addition, another 3000 posts of Extra Departmental Delivery Agents/Mail Carriers are expected to be created for these 5000 post offices.

Stoppage of supply of coal and mineral to other States by Bihar

481. SHRI ANANDA PATHAK: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Bihar (Government have decided to stop the supplies of coal and mineral ores to other States if the undertakings mining these ores in Bihar continue to maintain their head offices in other States; and

(b) if so, what is the Central Government's reaction in the matter?

THE MINISTER *Cr?* STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI KARIA MUNDA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Agricultural Labour Committee

482. SHRI HARKISHAN SINGH SURJEET;
SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA;
SHRI BHOLA PRASAD:

Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government propose to set up a Second/Third Agricultural Labour Committee;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI LARANG SAI): (a) The Government have decided to set up a Central Standing Committee on Rural Unorganised Labour. Apart from this, four enquiries into the conditions of agricultural/rural labour have been conducted in the years 1950-51, 1956-57, 1963-65 and 1974-75.

(b) The Committee would consist of the representatives of employers

and employees and other expert organisations connected with the field of Agricultural Labour. Other details regarding this Committee are being finalised.

(c) Does not arise.

Visit of Shah of Iran to China

483. SHRI HARKISHAN SINGH SURJEET; Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state'

(a) whether the Shah of Iran visited China recently; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the Government of India in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. KUNDU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise

Large scale rioting- and looting in Malagasy

484. SHRIMATI MAIMOONA SULTAN; SHRIMATI KUMUDBEN MANISHANKAR JOSHI;

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was large scale rioting and Indians were looted in Malagasy in the last week of May this year;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what is the loss of life and property suffered by the Indians?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. KUNDU): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Student demonstrations in Antananarivo, capital of Madagascar, on 29th and 30th May turned violent which were joined by disgruntled unemployed Malagasy nationals and anti-social elements. There was wide-spread damage to property and some loss of life. Fortunately no Indian was killed. However shops belonging to persons of Indian origin including those of 8 Indian nationals were ransacked and looted. According to a quick estimate made by our Mission the total value of loss of property belonging to Indian nationals could well exceed US \$ 4 million. Our Ambassador in Antananarivo has taken up the matter with the Malagasy authorities seeking prevention of such incidents and to ensure protection of life and property of Indian expatriates. While expressing regret over the incidents, the Malagasy authorities have assured that they will do their best to ensure security of persons of Indian origin and safety of their property.

Talk.* with the Government of Austria on the formation of Indian Ocean into a Zone of Peace

486. SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during his recent visit to Austria, he held discussions with the foreign Minister of Austria on the question of formation of Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace; and

(b) if so, what was the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. KUNDU): (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.