

last three months (August, September and October, 1967) only 72 families have left the village sites in Dandakaranya. The rate in the number of families leaving village sites has fallen greatly and there does not appear to be any cause for alarm. On the other hand, displaced persons who had once left the village sites have been seeking readmission to Dandakaranya. Eight families have been readmitted in August and September, 1967.

A factor which has contributed substantially to the stabilization of rehabilitation in Dandakaranya is the economic well-being of the agriculturist settlers. Apart from being the beneficiaries of extension and other services on an intensive scale, the settlers this year are having a good harvest.

CENTRAL ASSISTANCE FOR MINOR IRRIGATION PROGRAMME IN M. P.

***325. SHRI S. D. UPADHYAYA :**
SHRI RAM SAHAI :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any request has been received by Government from the Madhya Pradesh Government for Central assistance of Rs. 2 crores for minor irrigation programme in the State; and

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

Central assistance for minor irrigation programme in M. P.

(a) and (b) During the visit of the Union Minister for Food and Agriculture to Bhopal in September, 1967, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh sought an additional allocation of Rs. 2 crores for expansion of minor

irrigation programme in the State during 1967-68. Subsequently, the Chief Minister informed the Union Minister that detailed proposals would be sent shortly. The detailed proposals have not yet been received. In the meantime, the Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh has been informed that owing to paucity of funds, the Government of India is unable to provide additional allocation for minor irrigation programme in the State during the current financial year. The State Government have, however, been advised that resources for the minor irrigation programme could be tapped from agencies in the non-plan sector like Land Mortgage Banks, Agricultural Refinance Corporation, Agro-Industries Corporation, etc.

POSTAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT

***326. SHRIMATI TARA RAMCHANDRA SATHE :** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a depositor of the postal savings account requires to give a specimen signature or a thumb impression;

(b) whether the postal authorities find it difficult to have any signature or thumb impression from blind persons; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take for easy and quick identification of blind persons in order to avoid the delay in their postal transactions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. For making withdrawals from post office savings bank accounts, blind persons are treated as illiterate and, therefore, as in the case of an illiterate persons, 'mark' or seal of the blind person on the withdrawal form is required to be attested by a respectable person known to the post office at the time of making payment to him. An