

(b) Rs. 30 lakhs approximately.

(c) No officer has been specially deputed to assess the cumulative physical achievements in these blocks. Officers of the Ministry of Community Development and Home Affairs however, occasionally visit some of these areas to take stock of the situation and provide the necessary guidance.

SHRI T. BODRA: May I know if the hon. Minister had received any reports about the arrest of an Additional District Magistrate and some contractors who are alleged to have misappropriated Rs. 9 lakhs of the Mahwadanr multi-purpose project in the district of Palamu of Bihar?

SHRI S. K. DEY: That is a separate question. I thought the question here related to Orissa.

SHRI T. BODRA: My question was whether the hon. Minister has received some reports about the arrest of an Additional District Magistrate and some contractors who were in charge of the multi-purpose project in the Mahwadanr Thana in the district of Palamu in Bihar.

SHRI S. K. DEY: We have received a report of some alleged gross irregularities committed by Government officers in a particular Block along with a certain number of non-officials. The case, I understand, is proceeding in the court, and it is difficult for us to pass any opinion.

SHRI T. BODRA: In view of the fact that this complaint is made, may I know what action the Government is taking to prevent such misappropriations in other Blocks?

SHRI S. K. DEY: The Bihar Government has already taken action tightening up procedures. The hon. Member will appreciate that tightening up of control over local officers does not go quite hand in hand with decentralisation which we are also advocating at the same time.

SHRI T. BODRA: May I ask if any Central C.I.D. officers have been deputed to find out if any such corruption is going on in the Community Development Blocks in the State of Bihar?

SHRI S. K. DEY: Not to my knowledge.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Is this the only State where multi-purpose Blocks have not been able to give benefits to tribal areas due to corruption or are there any other States about which complaints have been received? If so, which States are they?

SHRI S. K. DEY: I have not received any specific complaints from any other place. But I presume that in a vast country like this a certain amount of irregularity will be committed here and there. All State Governments, I believe, have been alerted about this situation which was reported fairly widely in the press.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know if the Central Government has any machinery to safeguard the proper utilisation of the vast sums of money spent on multi-purpose Blocks?

SHRI S. K. DEY: I think the only safeguard against malpractices either by officials or non-officials ultimately is an enlightened popular opinion at the Block level itself which is what we are trying to create.

*427. [The questioner (Shri Nawab Singh Chauhan) was absent. For answer, vide Cols. 2445—47, infra.]

DEPENDENCE ON PAKISTAN FOR JUTE REQUIREMENTS

*428. SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the extent to which indigenous production of jute has so far helped India to do away with her dependence on Pakistan for her own requirement?

THE MINISTER OF CO-OPERATION (DR. P. S. DESHMUKH): The internal production of jute and mesta

has narrowed down our dependency on imports from Pakistan from 45 lakh bales in 1948-49 to 6.95 lakh bales in 1957-58.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know what is the total acreage of land at the moment under jute cultivation and whether any increase has been recorded during the last year?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: Yes, Sir, a very considerable increase has been recorded. This year, that is, in 1958-59, the area under jute cultivation is 16.47 lakh acres as against 14.73 lakh acres during the last year, 1957-58. This shows an increase of 1.74 lakh acres, or 11.8 per cent. over the preceding season.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I have the break-up of jute cultivation according to the States?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: I have got it. I am prepared to lay the statement on the Table of the House.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know whether the Government have in hand any expansion scheme for jute cultivation?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: Yes, Sir. We have intensified the drive so far as better cultivation of jute is concerned. We are trying to improve it. There is not much emphasis on increase of area, but on better production.

BUILDING FOR THE HEAD POST OFFICE AT BARIPADA

*429. **SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK:** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) since when the head post office at Baripada has been located in a rented house and what is the annual rent paid therefor;

(b) whether Government propose to construct a building for this post office; and

(c) if so, when the proposal is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (**SHRI S. K. PATIL**): (a) The Post Office at Baripada has been located since 1-4-1957 in a rented building at an annual rent of Rs. 2,400.

(b) and (c). The proposal is at an initial stage.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know whether the Government is aware that the post office at Baripada was located in an old building lent by the former State of Mayurbhanj and if so, what use is being made of that and whether there is any proposal to build a house of its own to accommodate this Head Office there?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: Yes, it was located there and we are trying to fix the price for that building. But there is some dispute. In case favourable terms are offered, we shall do so.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know whether it is not a fact that the free use of the building as well as the land was given to the Department by the former State Government?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: I have no information on that.

*430. [Postponed to 15th September, 1958.]

DARJEELING-HIMALAYAN SECTION

*431. **SHRIMATI MAYA DEVI CHETTRY:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the speed of the trains running on the Darjeeling-Himalayan Section; and

(b) whether Government propose to increase the speed?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (**SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN**): (a) The maximum booked speed on the Section is 18 miles per hour between Siliguri Junction and Sukna and 11 miles per hour between Sukna and Darjeeling.

(b) No.

SHRIMATI MAYA DEVI CHETTRY: May I know whether there is any