

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOK-ERJI: Is there any fundamental technical reason for explaining the shortage of yarn for the handloom weavers?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I could not hear the question. I heard "technical" but what am I to do?

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOK-ERJI: Is there any fundamental technical reason for explaining the shortage of yarn for the handloom weavers?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: They are two profound words, Sir, but the normal reason is that at times it happens that our total production of yarn is less than the requirements of our mills and the handlooms and our attempt all along has been to see that an adequate quantity of yarn is produced in the country. Recently we have taken steps to increase the spindleage so that there will no more be any shortages, either for the mills or for the handlooms.

BABU GOPINATH SINGH: May I know as to whether it is a fact that the weavers have been demanding of the Central Government to start a spinning mill for the supply of yarn to the handlooms and that the Government has promised to start one on co-operative lines? If so, what has been done in that direction?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Government have recently encouraged the starting of a co-operative mill for the production of yarn. We have not restricted ourselves to giving the consent; we have also given help in other ways. For instance, there is that mill in Guntakal. Some others are also there into which I need not go now—I would require notice about these various places where they are situated—but there is one in Karwar (Hubli) which is going to come up in the near future. The sum and substance of the matter is that we are interested in encouraging the co-operative mills. If any such proposals come up before Government, we will place that item as priority number

one. We will place the others after that item.

\*164. [For answer, vide cols. 1293-94 infra.]

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICES BUILDING AT MUZAFFARPUR

\*165. SHRI R. P. N. SINHA: Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) when and from whom the present building occupied by the Post and Telegraph Offices at Muzaffarpur was acquired by the Department;

(b) whether Government are aware that the building is in a dilapidated condition; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the construction of a new building for the Post and Telegraph Offices at Muzaffarpur is being deferred for the last several years: if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) The building was purchased in 1902 from the defunct Tirhut State Railway.

(b) The building is old and the accommodation therein is not sufficient.

(c) The scheme for the new building will be sanctioned shortly.

#### HOUSES BUILT FOR WORKERS IN PENCH VALLEY COALFIELD AREA

\*166. DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of houses built for the workers in the Pench Valley Coalfield area during the First Five Year Plan period;

(b) the total amount of fund which was (i) available and (ii) actually spent for the construction of such houses during the same period; and

(c) the number of houses which are proposed to be built in that area during the Second Five Year Plan period?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) Information is not available. However, the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund paid subsidy for construction of 30 houses.

(b) (i) Rs. 17,60,266.

(ii) Rs. 16,976.

(c) This information also is not available, but according to present estimate funds for construction of about 1,380 houses in that area would be available, from the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Are Government aware that for this particular mining area, where nearly 25,000 workers are employed and where the cost of a standard house is Rs. 2750, the Fund will not be able to meet even one-tenth of the demand for houses? As such, do Government propose to make available some amount for repairing the existing houses which are in a dilapidated condition?

SHRI ABID ALI: Sir, funds for repairing miners' houses, either owned by the miners or by the collieries, will not be available from this organisation.

#### TELEPHONE EXCHANGES IN ASSAM

\*167. SHRI R. THANHLIRA: Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges opened in Assam between January and October, 1956, and the places at which they were opened;

(b) the number of exchanges that are proposed to be opened there by the end of December, 1956 and the names of places where such exchanges are proposed to be opened; and

(c) whether the Ration Allowance granted to the Post and Telegraph employees in Mizo District has been discontinued; if so, since when it was discontinued?

THE MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) Five—

1. Hojai
2. Borjhar
3. Raha
4. Barpeta Town
5. Barpeta Road.

(b) Three—

1. Tura
2. Dergaon
3. Aijal.

(c) Yes; from 1st June 1956, in view of revised allowances sanctioned by Government.

SHRI R. THANHLIRA: In regard to (c) may I know whether the Government is aware that employees of other Departments of the Central Government who are stationed in the same District are still drawing this Ration Allowance and it is discontinued only in the case of P. & T. employees?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: This ration Allowance was in the nature of Dearness Allowance which other employees also get. Apart from that an additional facility or option has been given to the P. & T. employees in so far as they have been allowed to retain this allowance in lieu of the revised allowances in case they so choose so long as they are not transferred to other districts.

SHRI R. THANHLIRA: In regard to (a) and (b), in view of the fact that in certain towns sites are available for telephone exchanges and even materials are available, may I know why the opening of exchanges are being held up? For example in Aijal . . . .

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I can only give certain figures to show the progress that we have made. In 1951 there were only 13 telephone exchanges in Assam while today we have got 34. The number of P.C.O.s. also has been trebled. The material that