

costing Rs. 61,000 are, however, vacant at present but proposals for suitably utilising these are under consideration.

(d) No new construction on account of this shifting of office work was found necessary.

EMPLOYEES OF THE DARJEELING HIMALAYAN SECTION OF THE N.E. RAILWAY

*246. DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scales of pay of the railway staff employed on the Darjeeling Himalayan section are the same as the scales of pay of the staff employed on the Assam section of the North Eastern Railway; if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether it is a fact that the service rendered by the staff of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, before that Railway was taken over by Government is not being recognised by Government; if so why not?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) D.H. Railway staff on re-employment under Government were fixed in C.P.C. scales which are uniform throughout the N.E. Railway.

(b) The service has been treated as continuous for purposes of Provident Fund, Special Contribution to Provident Fund, leave, passes etc., but not for seniority *vis-a-vis* staff of the ex-Assam Railway.

POST OFFICES, TELEGRAPH OFFICES AND BRANCH POST OFFICES OPENED IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

116. SHRI C. L. VARMA: Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new Post Offices, Telegraph Offices and Branch Post Offices opened in Himachal Pradesh from the 15th April 1948 up-to-date; and

(b) whether it is a fact that the Telegraph Offices in Kotkhai and Jubbal have not so far been completed; if so, when they are likely to be completed?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) Sub-Post Offices opened—3 including one combined sub-office.

Branch Post Offices opened—45 and in addition 11 sanctioned for opening in July and August but date of opening not yet known.

Telegraph Offices—3.

(b) Yes; efforts are being made to have the offices opened before end of this year.

FOODGRAIN PRICES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

117. SHRI C. L. VARMA: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that there is great resentment amongst the public of Himachal Pradesh on account of the high prices of foodgrains prevailing in that State;

(b) what are the wholesale prices of wheat in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Patiala and East Punjab States Union; and

(c) whether Government propose to subsidise the wheat prices in Himachal Pradesh?

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI): (a) A representation was received from the Himachal Pradesh Government regarding imported wheat allotted to them earlier in the year. Subsequent allotments have been made only from PEPSU and Punjab.