

Shri M. C. Shah: Headquarters or head offices?

Shri Anrudha Sinha: Head offices.

Shri M. C. Shah: There will be the Corporation's headquarters at Bombay and there will be five zonal offices and there will also be Divisional offices. We have already proposed 30 and, later on, when we see that the volume of business is more, then, we will increase that number of divisional offices. We propose to have 180 branch offices; that we have already settled. We propose to have 350 branches all over the country, a branch in each district.

Shri Anrudha Sinha: I wanted to know the names of some other places which had also advanced claims for the location of the head offices of the Corporation, not the branch of other offices.

Shri M. C. Shah: Calcutta had made a claim that the headquarters should be there.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: In view of the public statement made by the Chief Minister of West Bengal last April that Calcutta was going to be the headquarters of the Life Insurance Corporation, may I know if that statement was made by the Chief Minister on his own behalf or whether he had consultations with the Government of India which have ensued in a different result?

Shri M. C. Shah: The Chief Minister of West Bengal had written letters to the then Finance Minister and also to the Prime Minister. All the factors necessary for locating the headquarters were considered fully and, after consideration, it has been decided that the headquarters should be at Bombay. I have got all these; they are two long pages. If permitted, I will read the whole out.

Mr. Speaker: Nobody need volunteer any answer.

Shri R. P. Garg: May I know whether all the members of the staff recruited by the various Insurance Companies two years before would be confirmed after the setting up of the Insurance Corporation?

Shri M. C. Shah: As we have given an assurance to both Houses of Parliament that all those who were employees of the various Insurance Companies which are being nationalised will be taken up in the new Corporation, not a single person who was in the employ of any Insurance Company on 19-1-56 will be retrenched. And the question about permanency will also be considered after the Corporation is set up and after all the various branch offices have been established.

Shri Sadhan Gupta: May I know if any decision has been taken about the

pay-scales of the staff after the Corporation has been set up, because it was reported that the Minister himself had said that the pay-scales would be on the model of government pay-scales?

Shri M. C. Shah: We have appointed special committees to go into the pay-scales of the officers, and the lower staff. We have already taken tentative decisions, but not final decisions, with regard to the pay-scales of the lower-paid staff. But, so far as the highly-paid staff is concerned, we have taken decisions and the pay-scales are lower than what were obtaining in the various Insurance Companies.

Centenary Celebration of Universities

*702. **Shri Ramachandra Reddi:** Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one crore rupees have been sanctioned to each of the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras towards their Centenary celebrations; and

(b) if so, the broad details on which such amounts will be expended?

The Deputy-Minister of Education (Dr. K. L. Shrimall): (a) Yes, sir.

(b) Expenditure in this connection will be incurred on developments of a permanent nature, such as construction or expansion of buildings, endowment of professorships, scholarships, etc. and no part of the grant will be spent on mere celebration.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: May I know whether these funds are taken out of the University Grants Commission Funds?

Dr. K. L. Shrimall: Yes, Sir.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: May I know if these grants of money are in addition to whatever other sums of money which are going to be paid by the University Grants Commission to these three Universities?

Dr. K. L. Shrimall: shall need notice to answer that.

Shri M. K. Moitra: May I know if the Government have advised these Universities to set apart Rs. 25,00,000 out of these grants to be utilised as Reserve Fund?

Dr. K. L. Shrimall: I am not aware of that.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: May I know whether this expenditure was envisaged when the Budget for 1956-57 was framed?

Dr. K. L. Shrimall: I am not sure whether it was in the Budget, but we make a lump sum available to the University

Grants Commission, and the Commission is quite free to disburse the funds in the way in which it likes.

Shri T. S. A. Chettiar: The hon. Deputy Minister replied that this is to be spent on endowment of professorships, scholarships etc. May I take it that it will not be spent on recurring expenditure but only on such non-recurring expenditure as is necessary for the improvement of buildings?

Dr. K. L. Shrimai: I have already said that the expenditure in this connection will be on the developments of a permanent nature, such as construction or expansion of buildings, endowment of professorships, scholarships, etc. We have also said that no part of the grant will be spent on mere celebrations.

Flood in Aartala

*703. **Shri Dasaratha Deb:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether any warning was given to the inhabitants of Agartala Town (in Tripura) for adopting precautionary measures, on the eve of recent flood when water of Howrah river was seen increasing;

(b) if not, the reasons for such failure; and

(c) the number of days or hours during which Government machinery could not function?

The Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Datar): (a) Yes.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government machinery functioned throughout.

Shri Dasaratha Deb: Is it not a fact that no Government official, I mean, high official, could be seen on the first, second or third day of the flood and that the people of Agartala were left completely in a state of utter helplessness?

Shri Datar: That is not correct. In fact, as soon as it was apprehended that floods would be coming, the District Magistrate and other officers went round in jeeps and passed on a word of warning to as many people as they could.

Shri Dasaratha Deb: May I know whether Government propose to make a judicial enquiry into this matter, that is, about the rising floods at Agartala?

Shri Datar: There is no need to make any judicial enquiry in this case.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: May I know when the warning was given to district officials, whether any steps were

taken by them for precautionary measures other than just going round and telling the people that the floods are coming?

Shri Datar: At first, warning was given, and just when the water began to rise—in some places it was 6 to 7 feet deep—attempts were made by the officers and a number of persons were rescued by them.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: May I know if any bunds were erected during the day and night of those crucial days?

Shri Datar: There was one bund and I may point out to this House that the bund on the southern sector of the town had a number of breaches, and that was the reason why there was a resultant onrush of water.

Shri Biren Dutt: May I enquire whether the Criminal and Civil Courts in Agartala town remained closed for 17 days or not?

Shri Datar: They might have remained so because we had made arrangements for rescuing the people and for keeping them in public offices almost for about one week.

Shri Biren Dutt: In view of the fact that a statement has been made by the hon. Minister of Irrigation and Power that about a crore of rupees worth Government property had been lost on account of the floods there, how is it that the hon. Minister is saying that there has been a loss of Rs. 3 crores and some copies of documents and papers?

Shri Datar: The hon. Member is misinformed. Only during last week, I informed this House that the value of the Government property lost was approximately Rs. 3,64,816 and not Rs. 3 crores.

Shri Dasaratha Deb: The hon. Minister just now said that Government was quite alert about the floods and had informed the people to take precautions. In that case, how is it that all this property was lost, and even documents from Courts and rent lists had been completely lost?

Shri Datar: That was because there were certain safes and other things in which Government stamps had been kept. When there was water for such a long time there, they naturally had been soiled. The extent of the loss that I have mentioned includes all these.

Small Savings

*704. **Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether a nation-wide campaign for Voluntary Small Savings has recently been launched by Government to finance the Second Five Year Plan;