

(b) Government have decided to go in appeal in the Supreme Court against the judgement of the Madras High Court. Suitable instructions have, however, been issued separately for guidance of the Central Government offices located in Tamil Nadu and also those in States other than Tamil Nadu.

Proposed Agitation by Kerala Telephone Employees

1101 SHRI M. K. KRISHNAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the proposed agitation by the Telephone and Telegraph PMR Employees' Union in Kerala in support of their demands ;

(b) if so, what are their main demands ; and

(c) whether any steps have been taken by Government to meet their demands ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA) : (a) to (c). The P&T Board had received information that Kerala Telephone and Telegraph PMR Employees Union had launched an agitation for settlement of certain problems pertaining to mazdoors and casual labourers working in the Telegraph and Telephone Wing. The agitation launched was in the form of a token Satyagraha in front of the office of the Postmaster General, Trivandrum for three days from 19th to 21st April, 1971. A small group of about 25 persons collected in front of the main gate on the 19th April, 1971 and shouted slogans demanding settlement of demands of the mazdoors. The main demand of the Union was to make its members a part of the regular establishment and also grant them all the benefits of regular establishment, including security of employment, benefit of Provident Fund, enhanced allowances, etc. The above demands were of a general nature and pertain to all Departments of the Government of India. So far as the P&T Department is concerned, some of these mazdoors have been absorbed against regular vacancies from time to time.

Regional Disparities and Imbalances

1102. SHRI N. S. BISHT : Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state the remedial steps Government have taken or propose to take to reduce the regional imbalances ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House. Attention is also invited to paragraphs 1.38 to 1.40 (pages 17-19) of the Fourth Five Year Plan Report, a copy of which was laid on the Table of the House in April, 1970

Statement

The various remedial measures undertaken to correct the regional disparities and imbalances are set out below :

- (i) In allocating Central assistance among various States for the Fourth Five Year Plan, after providing for the requirements of the States of Assam, Nagaland and Jammu & Kashmir, which have special problems, 10% of the sum available for distribution by way of Central assistance has been allocated to the six States of Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh whose *per capita* income was below the national average ;
- (ii) The non-Plan gap in the resources of nine States (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Mysore, Orissa, Rajasthan and West Bengal) estimated to be Rs. 795.23 crores during the Fourth Plan period, is being met by the Centre, so that they can utilise all the additional resources which they can mobilise during the Fourth Five Year Plan period for financing their development programmes ;
- (iii) A liberal pattern of Central assistance has been evolved for the development of hill and border