

(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

- areas. The entire expenditure on their development programmes is being met by the Government of India within the total Central assistance for each of the States concerned ; 90% of the amount of expenditure incurred in this behalf in Meghalaya, Assam, Nagaland, Jammu & Kashmir (Ladakh) and Himachal Pradesh (Lahaul, Spiti and Kinnaur districts) is given as a grant. The balance of 10% is treated as loan. The pattern of Central assistance in the hill and border districts of Uttar Pradesh, Darjeeling (West Bengal) and Nilgiris (Tamil Nadu) is 50% grant and 50% loan.
- (iv) For the reason that they are socially and economically backward, the development programmes of all the Union Territories, including N.E.F.A., are fully financed by the Centre. Their non-Plan gap is also met by the Centre.
- (v) Special assistance of Rs. 45 crores is being provided to the Government of Andhra Pradesh to enable it to spend this amount during the period ending on 31.3.1974 on the special regional development programme of Telengana area in addition to the Plan outlays in that area ;
- (vi) A special area development programme costing Rs. 4.5 crores is being implemented in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands under the auspices of the Department of Rehabilitation ;
- (vii) An important measure for reducing disparities is accelerating the pace of industrial development in backward areas. The districts needing attention have been identified and notified with the cooperation of the State Governments in pursuance of the criteria laid down by the Pande and Wanchoo Committee Reports. Preference is being given to such areas in the location of large-scale industrial projects in the public sector, provided they are found to be feasible on techno-economic considerations. The Licensing Committee also gives preferential treatment to applications from the backward regions.
- (viii) Rs. 32.50 crores have been allocated during the Fourth Five Year Plan for 489 Tribal Development Blocks under a Centrally-sponsored scheme.
- (ix) Techno-economic surveys have been conducted for the States of Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and NEFA. Surveys of backward districts of Orissa, viz. Kalahandi, Bolandgir and Phulbani, hill and backward areas of Punjab, primitive tribes of Madhya Pradesh and of Basti districts in U.P. have also been conducted. A Study Team has conducted a survey of the development programmes of tribal areas. A Central Team has also studied the problems of tribal people in Andhra Pradesh.
- (x) District Plans are being prepared in some of the States which will result in identifying the problems of backward regions and will help in evolving measures for solving their problems.
- (xi) A Hill Development Board has been constituted in Uttar Pradesh. Advisory Committees have been set up for the backward districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bundelhand.
- (xii) A Telengana Development Committee and a Plan Implementation Committee have been constituted to expedite the progress of development programmes in Telengana.
- (xiii) 209 industrially backward districts have been selected throughout the country for concessional finance for new industries from the financial

and credit institutions. In addition, the Central Government is giving an outright grant or subsidy amounting to 1/10th of the fixed capital investment of new units having a total fixed investment of not more than Rs 50 lakhs each, in two selected districts in each of the 9 States identified as industrially backward *viz* Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Orissa, West Bengal and U. P. and one district in each of the remaining States and Union Territories.

- (xiv) Under the Border Roads Development Programme considerable investment is being made in the border areas.
- (xv) Special programmes of large magnitude are being implemented for the benefit of the weaker sections of the rural population and for the development of dry and arid areas. These special programmes are being sanctioned and implemented under the guidance of a Central Committee of Co-ordination presided over by a Member of the Planning Commission. An officer of the rank of Additional Secretary is the Member-Secretary of this Committee. 46 Small Farmers' Development Agency Projects, 41 projects for sub-Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labour and 24 projects for farmers in dry areas have been sanctioned. An amount of Rs. 100 crores has also been provided for an integrated programme of rural works in 54 chronically drought affected areas.
- (xvi) A crash scheme for rural unemployment has also been launched with a provision of Rs 50 crores per annum.
- (xvii) A Rural Electrification Corporation has been set up recently and is giving finance on concessional terms to State Electricity Boards for

rural electrification programmes in backward areas.

### पर्वतीय क्षेत्रों का आर्थिक विकास

1103. श्री नरेन्द्र सिंह बिष्ट : क्या योजना मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या योजना आयोग ने योजनाओं में देश के पर्वतीय क्षेत्रों का आर्थिक विकास करने के लिए योजनाओं में कतिपय विशेष कार्यक्रम बनाये थे ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो उनकी क्रियान्विति में कितनी प्रगति हुई है ?

योजना मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मोहन धारिया) : (क) और (ख). जी, हां। पहाड़ी क्षेत्र की चौथी योजना में कार्यक्रमों तथा उनकी क्रियान्विति को बताने वाला विवरण सभा-पटल पर रख दिया है। [ग्रन्थालय में रखा गया। देखिए संख्या LT—282/71]

### Lowering of Retirement Age from 58 to 55 Years

1104. SHRI K. M. MADHUKAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons for raising the retirement age of the Central Government employees from 55 to 58 years some years ago ;

(b) whether this decision has an adverse impact on the employment of educated youths ; and

(c) if so, whether Government are contemplating to bring down the retirement age from 58 years to 55 years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) to (c) The age of retirement of Central Government employees was raised from 55 to 58 years with effect from 30th November, 1962, after a thorough examination of all relevant