

(f) if so, the details thereof and particularly in regard to the tribal, backward and hilly areas:

(g) whether any Committee has been constituted for identification, liberation and rehabilitation of bonded labourers; and

(h) if so, the details thereof and achievements made so far by the said Committee?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (d). The State Governments have reported identification of 2,51,424 bonded labourers out of which 2,30,915 bonded labourers have been rehabilitated under Centrally Sponsored Scheme for rehabilitation of bonded labour which envisage rehabilitation assistance upto the ceiling limit of Rs. 10,000/- per bonded labour. The expenditure is equally shared by Centre and State Governments on (50:50) basis. The State-wise details of bonded labourers identified/released and rehabilitated are given in the enclosed Statement

(e) and (f) The details of funds released during last three years to the States are given below. No funds were sought by the State Government of Gujarat during the last three years. The area-wise details are not maintained

(Rs. in lakhs)

State	Amount released under Centrally Sponsored Scheme for rehabilitation of Bonded Labour		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Andhra Pradesh	101.41	31.25	79.37
Bihar	6.18	6.61	-
Karnataka	171.50	42.66	2.84
Kerala	6.03	-	-
Orissa	5.75	0.39	1.63
Rajasthan	1.69	3.28	5.70
Tamil Nadu	1.59	1.12	-
Total	294.15	85.31	89.54

(g) No, Sir.

(h) Question does not arise.

STATEMENT

State-wise Details of Bonded Labourers

Name of the State	Number of Bonded Labourers	
	Identified & Released	Rehabilitated
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	36,289	29,553
Bihar	12,986	12,270

1	2	3
Karnataka	62,708	55,231
Madhya Pradesh	12,804	11,897
Orissa	49,971	46,808
Rajasthan	7,478	6,217
Tamil Nadu	38,886	39,375
Maharashtra	1,382	1,300
Uttar Pradesh	27,489	27,469
Kerala	823	710
Haryana	544	21
Gujarat	64	64
Total	2,51,424	2,30,915

[English]

Decrease in the Arrivals of Foreign Tourists

225. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been any decrease in the number of foreign tourists during the first six months of 1996-97 in comparison with the same period during 1995-96;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the extent of loss of foreign exchange suffered due to such decrease?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) there was no decline in the foreign tourist arrivals during the first six months of 1996-97 as compared to the same period of 1995-96. The comparative figures are as given below.

Tourist Arrivals			
Period	1995	1996	% Change
April-Sept.	879381	929944	5.7

(b) and (c). Does not arise.

Privatisation of Various Jobs

226. SHRI ANNASAHIB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have identified areas in Telecommunication and postal service for involvement of private sector in carrying out various jobs operations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken/proposed by the Government for modernisation of postal services and aggressive marketing in profitable areas for earning more revenues; and

(d) the details of strategies worked out by Postal Department to compete with private agencies which are expanding profitably?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) :

Telecommunications

(a) and (b). In the Department of Telecom, all the works pertaining to maintenance are carried out by the Department only. However, some jobs such as cable laying, duct construction, construction of overhead alignments, computerisation etc. are given on contract to private parties, depending on the local needs.

Postal

In order to provide basic postal facility extensively, Department of Post have been allowing licenced postal agents to operate under specific terms and conditions to sell stamps and stationery and book registered articles. Individual, Firm or Society are allowed agencies for sale of stamps and stationery. Similarly, in order to provide basic postal services in rural area not having such services and where opening of a post office is justified, scheme of Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras has been introduced in 1995. Under this scheme Gram Panchayat at the Headquarter of village where post office is justified, is allowed to set up Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendra to provide sale of stamps and stationery, book registered articles and deliver unaccountable articles in the village and provide facility for small saving schemes.

(c) and (d). Department is modernising postal services with induction of technology and computer in different areas of activity. Computer-based counter machines providing efficient responsive and error free service are already operating in about 2600 counters in the country. Modernisation of mail processing in important nodal points to handle large volume of mail has also been undertaken and two Air Mail Processing Centres have been set up at Mumbai and Chennai respectively. Computers have also been introduced for different areas of operations in Saving Bank, Postal Life Insurance and Material Management. Introduction of Track and Trace in Speed Post is also intended to make the service more customer-friendly.

A Business Development Directorate within Department of Post has been set up w.e.f. 1.2.1996 to provide focussed management and marketing of premium product and for modernisation of the procedures of handling such products.

50% Concession to Persons in Train Fares

227. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :
SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the categories of persons which have been given

50 percent concessions in train fares by the Government during the last six months;

(b) the loss of revenue suffered by the Government every year on this account;

(c) the criterion fixed by the Government to issue free Travel Railway passes/concession passes to the people;

(d) whether any free travel railway passes/train concession passes have been issued during the last six months;

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the categories of persons;

(f) whether it is a fact that these passes are being misutilised by the people; and

(g) if so, the corrective measures taken by the Government in the regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The Railways grant standard 50% concession in fare to Deaf and Dumb persons, Unemployed Youths for interviews in PSUs including Government Offices/Statutory Body/Municipal Corporation/Government Undertaking/University/Public Sector Banks, Students, Artists, Coolies, Marine Engineers Apprentices, Sportsmen, Bharat Scouts and Guides, Dronacharya Awardees, Police Awardees, Parents accompanying National Bravery Awardee, National Awarded Teachers and Press Correspondents. These categories of persons have continued to avail this standard concession during the last 6 months. Besides, 50% concession has been granted to persons for attending the conferences and National Integration Camps of educational, cultural and social organisations.

(b) Railways are losing approximately Rs. 200 crores per annum on account of various concessions granted to different categories of passengers.

(c) As per extant guidelines, Complimentary Card Passes are issued, with the personal approval of Minister of Railways, to the following :

Category 'A' : Former Ministers/Ministers of State/Deputy Ministers in the Ministry of Railways.

Category 'B' : Organisations engaged in social, cultural, educational, sports and welfare activities.

Category 'C' : Eminent Persons engaged in above mentioned activities.

Category 'D' : Others which may include card passes on compassionate/medical grounds, etc.

Card Passes are issued either in First Class or Second Class depending upon the status of the Organisation/Individual, at the discretion of Minister of