

3. **Employment conditions:**
 Enhancement of educational qualifications.
 Age of entry.
 Working hours.
 Transfer liability.
 Leave facility, etc.

4. **Re-organisation:**
 No further creation of posts.
 No EDSO/BO to be opened for next 10 years.
 Total freeze on filling up vacant posts.
 Abolition of vacant posts.

5. **Public Facility:**
 SB withdrawal limit be increased.

The recommendations of JTC being concomitant with the recommendations of Fifth Central Pay Commission, these were processed in consultation with staff representatives immediately after Government's decision on the recommendations of Fifth Central Pay Commission. Consequently, Government had issued order on 12th November, 1997 to increase the basic monthly allowance of ED Agents by a factor of 3.25 pending detailed examination of the JTC recommendations. These orders were, however, opposed by staff federations and had to be kept in abeyance.

Postal strike during 8/9th July to 16th July, 1998 was resorted to by two Postal federations and their affiliated units, also representing ED Agents on a Charter of Demands which, inter-alia, included the demands for implementation of the positive recommendations and rejection of the adverse recommendations by JTC.

The postal strike was called off by the Joint Council of Action of postal staff federations in response to the appeal by the then Minister of Communications during her discussions with the staff representatives and her assurance for sympathetic and expeditious settlement of the issues including implementation of Justice Talwar Committee recommendations.

Implementation of recommendations of Justice Talwar Committee on postal ED Agents is under active consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Bagasse-Based Power Plants

*146. SHRI INDRAJEET MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government propose to pursue vigorously setting up of bagasse-based "Co-generation Power Plants" in the country;

(b) whether the cost of power generation will be substantially reduced through this method;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the States where such power plants are proposed to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes Sir. The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources are implementing a National Programme on Biomass based Power Generation which includes promotion of optimum bagasse based cogeneration in sugar mills in the country.

(b) and (c) The capital cost of bagasse-based cogeneration projects varies from about Rs. 2.5 crores to Rs. 3.5 crores per MW, depending upon the technical and operating parameters; system configuration; and, location of the project in a new or an existing sugar mill.

(d) An aggregate surplus co-generation capacity of 106 MW has already been established through 21 projects in the States of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka. An aggregate surplus capacity of 171 MW through 24 projects is under construction in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. An aggregate surplus capacity of about 145 MW through 20 projects is under various stages of planning and formulation in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Support Price of Paddy and Wheat

*147. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the procedure adopted to fix the support price of agro products like paddy and wheat etc. at present;

(b) the criteria adopted to fix support price;

(c) whether the labour put in by the farmer is also counted while fixing this support price; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The Government decides on the minimum support prices for various agricultural commodities taking into account the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), the views of State Governments and Central Ministries as well as other relevant factors which, in the opinion of the Government, are important for fixation of support prices.

(b) While recommending the minimum support prices, the CACP is enjoined to keep in view (i) the need to provide incentive to the producer for adopting improved technology and for maximising production; (ii) the need to ensure rational utilisation of land, water and other production resources; and