

(b) and (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) Several Schemes in the Fields of health, housing, education and recreation are already being implemented by the Government for the welfare of beedi workers in the country.

#### STATEMENT

Statement showing estimated number of beedi workers in the country.

State	No. of beedi workers
Uttar Pradesh	4,50,000
Karnataka	3,55,000
Kerala	1,36,000
Andhra Pradesh	6,25,000
Tamilnadu	6,21,000
Rajasthan	1,00,000
Gujarat	50,000
Orissa	1,52,000
Madhya Pradesh	6,50,000
Bihar	3,92,000
Maharashtra	2,56,000
West bengal	4,50,000
Assam	8,000
Tripura	5,000
Total	42,50,000

#### Effect on Steel Industry due to Hike in Petroleum

2508. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether hike in petroleum prices has affected the steel industry and likely to affect on steel producers;

(b) if so, whether any assessment has been made by the Ministry in this regard;

(c) whether the diesel price rise would result in increase cost of raw material and thereby make the finished products costlier;

(d) whether in view of this steel prices would go up;

(e) whether 85-90 per cent of the entire transport in the steel industry is handled through roads which would cost more; and

(f) if so, to what extent steel products will be affected due to this rise?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The hike in the prices of petroleum products will affect the steel products.

(b) It has been assessed that due to hike in petroleum prices, the direct impact on public sector steel plants during 1996-97 will be about Rs. 71 crores.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) At present the Government does not exercise any control over pricing of steel. The steel prices may however, go up to increase in prices of petroleum prices.

(e) and (f). Pricing of steel products will be affected to some extent. The impact on cost of production in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant for instance is likely to be about Rs.35/- per tonne of finished steel and Rs.5/- per tonne of pig iron.

[Translation]

#### Misbehaviour with Lady Passengers

2509. KUAMRI UMA BHARATI :

SHRI RAM NAIK :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the incidence of misbehaviour with lady passengers on board on Air India flight by the crew members have come to light recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the out come thereof;

(e) the action taken against the guilty employees; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to prevent recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (f). No, Sir. However, an employee travelling on leave, allegedly misbehaved with a lady passenger on board. The employees has been placed under suspension and a disciplinary enquiry has been initiated against him.

#### Non Electronic Media

2510. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the measures taken or proposed to be taken by his Ministry to strengthen the non-electronic media;

(b) whether the Government propose to expand and strengthen the field publicity organisation in the context of the coming into force of the Panchayati Raj and decentralisation of planning and implementation;

(c) whether the present set up for research and reference is centralised or any proposal to have regional Research and Reference Division in Delhi; and

(d) the comparative statement of enhancement of outlay for the electronic media and other media units, if any?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Strengthening of the non-electronic media is an ongoing process. This is achieved by means of monitoring, feedback, review and modernisation of the field units of the Ministry.

(b) The units of the Directorate of Field Publicity interact with local panchayats and work with them. Measures have been taken to modernise the audio-visual equipment and increase the reach of the field functionaries. New units have also been opened in remote areas during the 8th Five Year Plan period.

(c) Research, Reference and Training Division is a centralised set-up located in Delhi. There is no proposal to have regional Research, Reference and Training Division in Delhi.

(d) Statement is enclosed.

#### STATEMENT

##### Ministry of information and Broadcasting

*Outlay for the Electronic Media and Non Electronic Media Units for the year 1995-96 and 1996-97*

(Figures in Lakhs)

S.No.	Sector	Approved Outlay (1995-96)	Proposed Outlay (1996-97)	Percentage increase over 1995-96
1.	Electronic Sector (All India Radio/Doordarshan)	44878.00	48038.00	7.0
2.	Non-Electronic Sector (other Media Units) (figures include internal resources)	4672.00	5262.00	12.6

##### Functioning of Telephone Exchanges in Coochbehar

2511. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any complaints in respect of improper functioning of Dinhat telephone exchange in district Coochbehar (West Bengal) during the last three years and till date; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. A complaint from Shri Amar Roy Pradhan, M.P. dated 12.9.95 was received by the Govt. regarding improper functioning of Dinhat telephone exchange in Coochbehar district.

In the month of June'95 the transmission equipment was damaged due to heavy lightning, interrupting the services. Normalcy was restored on 23.6.95 necessary spare equipments have been procured to avoid such prolonged interruptions.

[Translation]

##### Packing of Wheat and Rice

2512. JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Food Corporation of India has changed the packing of wheat and rice;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the quantity of foodgrains likely to be supplied in changed packing during 1996-97;

(d) whether expenditure on new packing is more in comparison to the old packing; and

(e) if so, the details of extra expenditure likely to be incurred by the FCI during 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b). It has been decided to switch over to 50 Kg. packaging of foodgrains (wheat and rice) in a phased manner spread over a period of five years starting from Kharif 1994-95 seasons.

(c) Excluding the quantities procured by State Govt. agencies, 6.59 lakh MTs of wheat has been packed in 50 Kg. packaging in rabi 1996-97 out of total procurement of 21.5 lakh MTs by the Corporation. Procurement of paddy/rice in 1996-97, is yet to commence.

(d) and (e). Excluding the additional cost to be incurred in stitching, handling and transportation, cost of jute gunnies per quintal is likely to go up by about 24% when foodgrains are packed in 50 Kg. Bags as against 95 Kg. bags at present.

[English]

##### Expansion of Telecom System in Maharashtra

2513. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the funds allocated/utilised for development.