

Assistance given to States for Postal and Telecommunications Facilities

*238. SHRI GIRDHAR GOMANGO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry have prepared the plan and provided money on Priority basis to the identified backward States and the districts for the development of communication facilities, both posted and telecommunication, soon after the identification in the current financial year;

(b) if so, the outlines thereof; and

(c) the financial assistance given to the States for these backward areas for the year 1976-77?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (DR. SHANKER DAYAL SHARMA): (a) and (b). **Telecommunication Facilities:** During the current year 800 P.C.Os. and 1100 telegraph offices are proposed to be opened in the country and circle-wise targets have been fixed. Financial allocations have also been made for every circle for telecommunication development in the whole circle including the backward areas in the circle. While telecommunication facilities are normally provided only when remunerative, but a liberal policy is followed in opening P.C.Os. and Telegraph Offices at certain categories of stations and are opened even if they involve some loss. The policy for category stations is placed on the table of the House. While a minimum revenue of 25 per cent of the annual expenditure is the criterion to be satisfied in ordinary areas, this is relaxed to 15 per cent in backward areas and 10 per cent in hilly areas.

Postal Facilities:

The Fifth Five Year Plan provides for opening of 7500 post offices at a financial outlay of Rs. 5 crores. Priority is given for opening post offices in every backward areas. For this purpose, the norms for opening

of post offices in backward areas have been relaxed as follows:—

(i) the permissible limit of loss (PLL) for opening of post offices is Rs. 1000/- per annum as against Rs. 750/- p.a. in normal rural areas with population of 2000 or more, and Rs. 500/- per annum in areas where the population is less than 2000. In exceptional cases, PLL is allowed upto Rs. 2500/-.

(ii) the minimum income required is 15 per cent of the cost in backward areas and 10 per cent in hilly areas as against 25 per cent of the cost for normal rural areas.

(iii) no condition regarding population is applicable in backward areas.

(c) **Telecommunications:**

No direct financial assistance is given by the P&T Department apart from the above concessional treatment.

Postal:

Rs. 12 lacs have been allocated to various postal circles in 1976-77. No separate allocation is made for backward areas.

STATEMENT

Revised policy for opening of Telegraph offices (Combined offices) and Public Call Offices on loss basis during 5th Five Year Plan.

The policy for opening of PCOs/COs on loss during the 4th Five-Year Plan as enunciated in letters No. 53-2/71-TPL dated 14-1-72 and 9-8-72 and amended vide letters Nos. 53-2/71-T.P.L 31-8-72 and again on 31-8-72 has been reviewed. The P&T Board has been pleased to revise this policy as under for the 5th Five Year Plan:—

I. Telegraph and Telephone facilities shall be progressively extended to different categories of stations as indicated below subject to an overall limit of loss not exceeding Rs. 80

lakhs for providing both these facilities during the 5th Five Year Plan i.e. from 1-4-74 to 31-3-1979.

II. Telegraph (Combined) Officers.

Combined (Telegraphs) offices may be opened at the category stations listed at 1, 2 and 3 below, without limit of loss and at 4 and 5 with a limit of loss of Rs. 2,000 per annum in each case in ordinary areas and Rs. 5,000 in each case in hilly and backward areas. The estimated revenue shall be at least 25 per cent of the Annual Recurring Expenditure. In the case of backward and hilly areas the percentage shall be at least 15 and 10 respectively.

1. Sub-Divisional Tehsil and Sub-Tehsil, Headquarters and corresponding stations.
2. Towns or villages with Police stations under the charge of an officer not lower in rank than a Sub-Inspector of Police.
3. Block Headquarters
4. Out of the way places i.e. places not having a Telegraph office within 20 Kms. (Radial Distance). 200 Telegraphs offices to be opened.
- 5(a) Places with a population of over 5,000 in ordinary areas and over 2,500 in hilly and backward areas. For considering the figures of population, the population of the village or town proper only should be taken into account and not that of a group of villages or towns.
- (b) Tourists Centres including Pilgrim Centres and Agricultural, Irrigation and Power, Project sites and townships.

Notes (i) The number of offices to be opened in respect of 5(b) and 5(c) together will be restricted to 100.

(ii) As provided in para 142-C of P&T Manual Vol. IX no telegraph office should be opened on loss if another Telegraph offices is already working within 8 Kms. radius of the proposed office.

III. Public Call Offices:

Public Call Offices may be opened on loss at the following categories of stations subject to the estimated revenue being at least 25 per cent of the Annual Recurring Expenditure. In the case of backward and hilly areas this percentage shall be at least 15 and 10 respectively.

1. Sub-Divisional Headquarter towns.
2. Tehsil and Corresponding Headquarter towns.
3. Sub-Tehsil—Headquarter towns.
4. Block Headquarters.
5. Places with a population of over 10,000 in ordinary areas and 5,000 in hilly and backward areas.
6. Places with population of over 5,000 in ordinary areas and 2,500 in hilly and backward areas situated within 12.5 Kms. (Radial Distance) from an existing telephone exchange. For considering the figures of population, the population of the village or town proper only should be taken into account and not that of a group of villages or town.
7. Places in remote localities—Such a place shall be defined as a place not having a telephone exchange within 40 Kms. (Radial Distance). 200 PCOs to be opened.
- 8(a) Tourist Centres, including Pilgrim Centres; and
- (b) Agriculture, Irrigation and Power, Project sites and townships.

Noxx (i):—The number of officers under categories 8(a) and 8(b) together shall be restricted to 200 PCOs.

(ii) The instructions contained in the Directorate letter No. 12-4/61-TPL dated 21-12-62 regarding submission of quarterly statements of the proposals sanctioned on loss basis for the opening of PCOs Telegraph Offices, (Combined Offices) should continue to be observed and returns submitted to this office regularly and in time.

(iii) The financial powers of the Heads of Circles for sanctioning proposals on loss will be Rs. 3,000 for a Combined Office and Rs. 5,000 for a Public Call Office in each case subject to the fulfilment of prescribed conditions.

Ratnagiri Aluminium Project

*239. SHRI SHANKERRAO SAVANT: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Aluminium Plant at Ratnagiri was sanctioned in April, 1974 at an estimated cost of more than Rs. 78 crores;

(b) whether Rs. 50 crores or thereabout were sanctioned for the Fifth Plan period;

(c) the amount spent on the project so far and how much has been surrendered; and

(d) whether the cost of the Project has gone up considerably owing to delay in implementation of the project and if so, the new estimates of the cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The estimate of Rs. 78 crores was based on 1973 prices.

(b) and (c). Plan provision of Rs. 50 crores was included in the draft Fifth Plan for this project, with the balance to spill over into the Sixth Plan. Initial funds were provided to meet the cost of land acquisition, preparation of Detailed Project Reports, salaries of nucleus staff etc. and a

total expenditure of Rs. 1.69 crores has been incurred upto 31-3-76; the question of surrendering any such amount, thus, did not arise.

Subsequent to the draft Fifth Plan document being drawn up, however, the general constraint of resources compelled re-examination of many projects like this one on which substantial start had not yet been made and for which steady flow of funds year to year till completion could not be foreseen.

(d) The estimated cost of this project now is about Rs. 105 crores based on 1976 prices. Such increase is inescapable in respect of projects that could not be financed earlier.

Interim relief to journalists

*240. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Wage Board for Working Journalists has recommended interim relief;

(b) if not, the reasons for this abnormal delay; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to expedite the same?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): (a) to (c). The Central Government had requested the Wage Board, in February, 1976, for its views on interim rates of wages in respect of working Journalists. The Board is seized of the matter and its views on the subject are expected sometime in September, 1976.

मनोविकारों के इलाज के लिये उपलब्ध सुविधाएँ

*241. श्री मूल सभ्य डागा : क्या स्वास्थ्य और परिवार विभाग मन्त्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या देश में मनोविकारों के इलाज के लिए पर्याप्त सुविधाएँ उपलब्ध हैं; और