

(ESC) have estimated Software and Services Exports amounting to Rs. 16,500 crores during April to September, 2001-2002.

(b) As per records of ESC, IT exports during the first half of 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 were as under:

April—September, 2000: Rs. 12,875 crores
(US\$2798 million)

April—September, 2001 : Rs. 17,200 crores
(US\$3659 million)

(c) Electronics Hardware exports during April—September, 2001 were Rs. 2500 crores, as compared to Rs. 1800 crores during April—September, 2000.

Beedi Workers in the Country

2678. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of beedi workers in the country, State-wise;
- (b) the details of the measures taken so far to improve the working conditions of the beedi workers;
- (c) whether the workers are still facing certain problems for which they have launched agitation; and
- (d) If so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) There are about 44 lakh beedi workers in the country, A statement showing the State-wise break-up of these workers is annexed. *{See below}*.

(b) Government have enacted the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, to protect beedi workers from exploitation of the employers, which is being implemented by State Governments. Government is also implementing a number of welfare schemes in the fields of Health, Housing, Social Security, Education and Recreation from the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund for the welfare of beedi workers and their dependants under the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act, 1976.

(c) and (d) The demands were made in the past also by the Beedi Workers Union which include fixation of uniform minimum wages, abolition of contract

system, supply of sufficient quantity of raw materials, issue of identity cards, etc. Most of these demands pertain to their working conditions for which Government has been requesting the State Governments for strict enforcement of the provisions of the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, and the Rules made under this Act. In regard to other demands, Government has taken appropriate action where needed.

Statement

State-wise break-up of Beedi workers in the country

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Total No. of Beedi Workers Estimated
1.	Andhra Pradesh	625050
2.	Assam	7725
3.	Bihar	391500
4.	Gujarat	5(XXX)
5.	Karnataka	360876
6.	Kerala	136416
7.	Madhya Pradesh	750000
8.	Maharashtra	256000
9.	Orissa	160000
10.	Rajasthan	100000
11.	Tripura	5(XX)
12.	Tamil Nadu	620950
13.	Uttar Pradesh	450CXX)
14.	West Bengal	497758
TOTAL:		4411275