

Other minerals like iron ore, manganese ore, coal, copper limestone, asbestos, apatite, steatite, vermiculite, graphite and various form-, of clays etc., of which there are significant deposits in the State and which were surveyed earlier are already being exploited.

Expansion of telephone services in A.P.

588. SHRI JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any target has been fixed for the expansion of telephones lines in Andhra Pradesh for the current year; and

(b) if so, what is the number of new connections proposed to be given?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Approximately 6,500 additional connections are expected to be provided during 1977-78.

Request for D.A. to P. and T. Department pensioners

589. SHRI VITHAL GADGIL; Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the All India Posts and Telegraphs Pensioners' Association for release of two instalments of dearness relief due to the pensioners of the Posts and Telegraphs Department as has been granted to other Government pensioners; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) All the instalments of the dearness relief applicable to the Central Government Pensioners

by the Government have also been granted to the P&T Pensioners. Representations have, however, been received for the grant of further additional relief to the P&T Pensioners which is a general issue linked with the grant of relief to all Central Government employees.

Shortage of accommodation for Postmen in Pune

590. SHRI VITHAL GADGIL; Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any memorandum from the Postal Union, Pune drawing Government's attention to the acute shortage of houses for postmen in the city; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is an acute shortage of Government accommodation for the P&T employees all over the country. The Government is keen to improve the situation in this regard but its efforts in this direction have been handicapped because of paucity of funds available for this purpose. According to the original Plan a sum of Rs. 6 crores was proposed for construction of quarters and acquisition *at* land for P&T colonies, which would have been sufficient for construction, of about 2,000 quarters only. During the new budget, this allocation has been raised by Rs. 1 crore, permitting the department to put up about 350 additional quarters. It is hoped to raise the allocation further next year.

At Pune, it is proposed to take up the construction of 96 Type-I quarters during the current year. On completion, these quarters will be allotted to various categories of P&T staff, who are entitled to these types of quarters, including the Postmen.

Radio Licences

591. SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state number of radio receiving licences as on the 31st March, 1977?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): The number of Broadcast Receiving Licences, as on 31-12-76 was 1,73,59,710. As regards the number on 31-3-1977, the information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Manufacture of Telephone Apparatus

592. SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone apparatus manufactured by the Indian Telephone Industries, Bangalore during the years 1975-76 and 1976-77; and

(b) the number of telephone lines required to meet the public demand during these years?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The Indian Telephone Industries manufactured about 1.89 lakh lines of exchange equipment in 1975-76 and 2.06 lakh lines in 1976-77. Out of this production, the equipment supplied to P&T for meeting the public demand for telephones was about 1.23 lakh lines in each of these two years. The remaining equipment was used for other purposes like trunk automatic exchanges, telex exchanges, PABXs, PAXs, etc.

The waiting list for telephone connections as on 1-4-1976 and 1-4-1977 was 2.49 lakhs and 1.39 lakhs, respectively. Based on availability of resources, 1.33 lakhs and 1.58 lakhs new telephone lines were provided, during 1975-76 and 1976-77, respectively.

Opening of Post Offices in villages in Maharashtra

593. SHRI DEORAO PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in Maharashtra and the names of the villages in Yavatmal District in that State where there are no post offices; and

(b) the number of post offices proposed to be opened in the villages in the State during 1977-78?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES):

(a) (i) Number of villages in 27465 Maharashtra without P. Os.

(ii) Number of villages in 1365 Yavatmal District with out Post Offices information regarding names of these villages is being collected and will be placed on the Table of

the House.

(b) 146.

Agricultural labour under the E.S.I. Scheme

594. SHRI BHOLA PRASAD: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state;

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to bring agricultural labour within the purview of the Employees' State Insurance Scheme; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) and (b) Government is anxious to see that benefits of social security and insurance reach the rural workers as well. With this in view, Government