

Linking of State Capitals with Delhi through STD

*406 SHRI IRENGBAM TOMPOK SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) by when all the State capitals will be linked with Delhi through the S.T.D., system; and

(b) what is the progress made so far in this direction ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (DR. SHANKER DAYAL SHARMA): (a) and (b) The following State capitals are connected to Delhi by STD at present :

Capital	State
1. Bombay	Maharashtra.
2. Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh.
3. Gandhinagar	Gujarat.
4. Chandigarh	Punjab & Haryana.
5. Jaipur	Rajasthan.
6. Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh.
7. Madras	Tamil Nadu.
8. Patna	Bihar, Jharkhand
9. Shimla	Himachal Pradesh.
10. Srinagar	Jammu & Kashmir.
11. Trivandrum	Kerala.

The following State capitals are proposed to be connected during the year :

1. Bangalore	Karnataka.
2. Bhubaneswar	Orissa.
3. Dispur	Assam.
4. Calcutta	West Bengal.
5. Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh.
6. Shillong	Meghalaya.

Gangtok (Sikkim), Imphal (Manipur), Kohima (Nagaland) and Agartala (Tripura) will be connected later after suitable medium becomes available and a Trunk Automatic Exchange is installed at Shillong.

Free bonded labour in forest villages

407. SHRIMATI LEELA DAMO DARA MENON :
SHRI R. NARASIMHA REDDY:
DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA BARTI :
SHRI ' NRIPATI RANJAN CHOUDHURY :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 400 given in the Rajya Sabha on 19th March, 1976 and state :

(a) whether Government have made any enquiry about the prevalence of the system of free bonded labour in forest villages; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI K. V. RAGHUNATHA REDDY): (a) No comprehensive enquiry has been made about the prevalence of bonded labour in forest villages. However, a statement giving gist of replies so far received from State Governments/Union Territories is laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Does not arise.
Statement

1. Andhra Pradesh

No instance of free labour prevailing in forest villages in State has come to the notice of the State Government.

2. Bihar

In Bihar forest villages were established in Singhbhum and Palamau districts with the object to obtain a sufficient and continuous supply of labour for fire protection and other improvement works. It is not a fact that free labour is taken from the forest villagers. The only condition was that the forest department will have first claim to their labour on payment. The villagers of forest villages are in fact not bonded labourers and such a condition is not being enforced by the Forest Department and they are free to work for Forest Department or not. The villagers are paid wages like other labourers when employed on forest works. State Government have already been moved to convert the forest villages into