

Post Offices during Fifth Five Year Plan Period

*557. SHRIMATI AZIZA IMAM :
SHRI MULKA GOVINDA
Reddy :

SHRIMATI SUMITRA G. KUL-
KARNI :

SHRI S. W. DHABE :

SHRI BHAIKAB CHANDRA
MAHANTI :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICA-
TIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the existing ratio between popula-
tion and post offices in the country; and

(b) the number of post offices likely to
be opened during the Fifth Five Year
Plan period ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICA-
TIONS (DR. SHANKER DAYAL
SHARMA) : (a) The average population
served per post office is 4646.

(b) During the first two years of the
Fifth Plan, 1526 post offices have been
opened. The number of post offices to be
opened during the remaining period of the
Plan will depend upon the number of
proposals which are justified according to
the departmental norms and also the
availability of funds.

Restructuring of Sail

*558. SHRI NIRANJAN SINGH
TALIB :

SHRI GIAN CHAND TOTU :

Will the Minister of STEEL AND
MINES be pleased to state whether Gov-
ernment have a proposal under considera-
tion for bifurcating the office of Chairman
of the Steel Authority of India Limited
and that of the Secretary of the Ministry
of Steel and Mines in view of the expan-
sion of SAIL ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES
(SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV) : There
are two Departments under the Ministry
of Steel and Mines—Department of Steel
and Department of Mines. The Chair-
man, Steel Authority of India Ltd. is also

the Secretary, Department of Steel. There
is at present no proposal to change this
arrangement.

National Telephone Grid Scheme

*559. SHRI SALIL KUMAR GAN-
GULI : Will the Minister of Communica-
tions be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to
formulate a National Telephone Grid
Scheme on the lines of the All India
Power Grid Scheme; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof
and by when it is likely to be implement-
ed ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICA-
TIONS (DR. SHANKER DAYAL
SHARMA) : (a) The National Grid for
Telephones which is called 'Telecommuni-
cation Network' is already in existence.
The Telecommunication Net-work till re-
cently consisted mostly of open-wire lines
with manual handling of trunk calls. Now
the main links of the net-work are pro-
vided by Microwave and Coaxial systems
Provision of nation-wide subscriber trunk
dialling is the ultimate objective. About
55 per cent of trunk calls are now handled
on automatic basis.

(b) The Telecommunication Network
Development plan envisages setting up of
about 350 Trunk Automatic Exchanges
at important traffic centres in the coun-
try connected by high capacity Coaxial
and Microwave links. 8 Trunk Automa-
tic Exchanges have so far been installed
and 12 more will be added during the
Fifth Plan. No time limit has been fixed
for implementation of the programme but
the scheme will be progressively imple-
mented consistent with availability of re-
sources and equipment.

Minimum Wages for Workers of Manganese Mines in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh

*560. SHRI S. W. DHABE : Will the
Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) when the wages were fixed for
manganese workers in Maharashtra and