

(a) the number of E. D. Postal staff employed in the Department of Posts and Telegraphs;

(b) the hours of work of such E. D. Postal staff.

(c) the scales of pay granted to them;

(d) the other benefits which are granted to them; and

(e) the reasons for continuing them as extra departmental employees ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) 2,99 468 as on 31.3.1984.

(b) Hours of work of E. D. staff range from 2 to 5 hours except for ED Chowkidar who can be engaged up to $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours per day.

(c) Since EDAs are not regular Government servants, they are not borne on any Pay Scales but are paid only consolidated allowance with reference to the workload handled by them for the Government. Their allowances now range between Rs. 152 and Rs. 315.

(d) The EDSPMs/ED BPMs are granted an office maintenance allowance of Rs. 10/- per month. Other categories of ED Agents are granted a special allowance of Rs. 5 per month. EDDA's and EDMCs are eligible for grant of cycle allowance in addition to their consolidated remuneration. ED Agents are also eligible at the time of their relief from ED service to grant of ex-gratia gratuity upto a maximum of Rs. 1000/- provided they have put in a minimum of 18 years of service. They are eligible for absorption in the Departmental Cadres of Postmen and Group 'D' under certain conditions. An ex-gratia payment of bonus is also made to the ED employees.

(e) The ED system is mainly intended to provide postal facilities in rural and backward areas of the country on viable economic terms where regular departmental post office is not justified on cost considerations and want of adequate workload. For manning such ED Post Offices, local residents of the area are employed on part-time basis and they are expected to have other avocations in life so that they may not depend solely

on the remuneration that they get from the Department for the services rendered by them. The working hours of these ED agents vary from 2 to 5 hours. At places where the Postal traffic exceeds 5 hours, the ED post offices may be converted into Departmental Sub Offices subject to satisfaction of the prescribed norms. The ED system enables the Department to provide a relatively extensive service in the rural and semi-urban areas at a reasonable cost commensurate with the workload and other relevant factors. In view of the abgoe, it is considered necessary to continue with the system.

[*Translation*]

Exploration of Oil in Madhya Pradesh

2229. SHRI M. L. JAIKRAM : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state :

(a) Whether any survey was conducted in Damoh, Jabalpur, Mandla and Chhindwara Districts in Madhya Pradesh for exploration of oil during 1984-85 ;

(b) the names of those districts in Madhya Pradesh, besides those Districts, where survey has been conducted for the purpose;

(c) whether there is any possibility of finding other minerals besides oil and if so, their names and the likely quantity thereof; and

(d) the details of the survey report and whether survey has been completed or it is yet to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA) : (a) In 1984-85, surveys were conducted in Jabalpur and Chhindwara Districts of Madhya Pradesh.

(b) Parts of Hoshangabad and Damoh Districts were covered by surveys in 1983-84.

(c) ONGC is engaged in exploration of oil and natural gas only.

(d) The results of the geochemical surveys conducted in Satpura basin, part of which falls in Madhya Pradesh has given

some positive indications. However, further surveys are planned in the area.

[English]

Pending Applications for new Telephone Connections in Kerala.

2230. PROF. K. V. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of applications for new telephone connections pending in Kerala; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken for the speedy installation of telephones ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) 41,996 applications are pending for provision of new telephone connections in Kerala Telecom. Circle as on 1-3-1985.

(b) It is proposed to expand the existing telephone exchanges wherever feasible and also to open new exchanges to clear the

pending waiting list in Kerala, depending upon the availability of equipment, Cables and other resources.

Petro-Chemical Plants

2231 SHRI ANANTA PRASAD SETHI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any proposal under their consideration to make massive investment in petro-chemical plants :

(b) if so, the number of such petro-chemical plants proposed to be set up in different parts of the country; and

(c) the progress made so far and the estimated cost of setting up each of the proposed petro-chemical plants ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA) : (a) to (c) The following petro-chemical projects have been taken up for implementation in the Central Public Sector :

	Estimated capital cost (Rs./crores)
1. Maharashtra Gas Cracker Complex in Nagothane in Maharashtra (IPCL)	11.67
2. Benzene project in Cochin (Cochin Refineries Limited)	59.40
3. Benzene project in Bombay (Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited)	56.50
4. Caprolactam project in Udyogmandal in Kerala (Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Limited)	147.94
5. Expansion of plants to manufacture Polypropylene Acrylic fibre Xylenes DMT LAB	58.65 85.03 59.36 13.15 18.38
} IPCL in Baroda	
6. Polyester staple fibre project in Bongaigaon (BRPL)	139.39

The projects are at various stages of implementation.