

(c) the total number of post offices that would be opened under the programme in Gram Panchayat Centres; and

(d) the total number of Post Offices to be set up in backward areas?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA):
(a) Yes. The P & T Department has proposed a large-scale programme for modernisation and expansion of Postal and Telecommunication Services in the country during the Fifth Five Year Plan at a total outlay of Rs. 1316 crores. The proposals are tentative and are still under consideration of the Planning Commission.

(b) The salient features of the proposals contained in the draft Fifth Five Year Plan of the P & T Department are as indicated in the statement laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-4197/73.]

(c) It is proposed to open about 29,000 new post offices during the Fifth Five Year Plan at those Gram Panchayat villages which are situated at a distance of more than 2 miles from the existing post offices.

(d) It is proposed to open about 5000 new post offices in the Fifth Five Year Plan in areas which have been declared as "Very Backward" for the purpose of extension of Postal facilities.

Expansion of Cinema net work in the country

239. **SHRI P. GANGADEB:**

SHRI P. M. MEHTA:

Will the Minister of **INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING** be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is considering a proposal for the expansion of the Cinema net work in the country; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA): (a) and (b). One of the recommendations adopted at the Conference of the State Ministers of Information held in New Delhi on December 8, 1972, was that the States should divert a fixed proportion of collections from entertainment tax for promoting the construction of more cinemas.

Production and Shortage of Cement

240. **SHRI P. GANGADEB:**

SHRI P. M. MEHTA:

Will the Minister of **INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a shortage of cement in the country;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry has initiated action to achieve an additional production of 1.5 million tonnes of cement by June next year; and

(c) if so, the nature of action taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM): (a) to (c). There is at present a shortage in the availability of cement due to loss of production as a result of (a) the general labour strike from 17th August, 1972 to 29th August, 1972, (b) the continuous power cut imposed by the State Electricity Boards in Haryana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Mysore, (c) the inadequate availability of covered wagons from the Railways and (d) Mechanical breakdowns etc. The shortage is likely to be further aggravated due to the distributed conditions in Andhra Pradesh