

INDIA

A REFERENCE ANNUAL

1955

COMPILED BY RESEARCH AND REFERENCE DIVISION
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

1910

STATE OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE

JANUARY 10, 1910

REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR 1909

ALBANY:

ANDREW DEWEY, STATE PRINTER

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PREFACE

Rapid changes have been taking place in India in recent years, and there are many within the country and abroad who require authentic information about the diverse aspects of our national life. In order to meet their needs, *INDIA: A Reference Annual* was first brought out by the Publications Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 1953. Its success encouraged the publishers to widen the scope of the publication in response to readers' suggestions. Accordingly, *INDIA 1955*, the third issue of the annual, contains many new sections, *viz.*, *History*, *Economic Structure*, *Land Reform*, *Cultural Activities* and a *Chronology* of Indian history. A bibliography has also been added at the end of each chapter. The States have been discussed more fully than in the previous volumes, while the names of the Members of the State Legislatures have been arranged alphabetically and their party affiliations given.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the distinguished scholars, economists and others who have helped us with advice and suggestions for the improvement of the book.

Delhi,

May 1955.

CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
<p>I THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE Land—Climate—Mineral and Power Resources—People—Economic Stratification—Age Structure—Marital Status Pattern—Religions—Languages—Indians Overseas</p>	1—32
<p>II HISTORY Indus Valley Civilisation—Indo-Aryans—Sultanate of Delhi—The Mughals—British Period</p>	33—42
<p>III CONSTITUTION Citizenship—Directive Principles—Union Executive—Parliament—Judiciary—State Governments—Election Commission—Amendment of the Constitution</p>	43—48
<p>IV NATIONAL SYMBOLS National Emblem—National Flag—National Anthem</p>	49—56
<p>V UNION GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT Council of Ministers—Lok Sabha (House of the People)—Rajya Sabha (Council of States)</p>	57—75
<p>VI JUDICIARY Supreme Court—High Court—Subordinate Courts—Separation of Judiciary from Executive—Reform of the Judicial System—Legal Practitioners</p>	76—87
<p>VII PUBLIC SERVICES</p>	88—92
<p>VIII DEFENCE Organisation—National Defence Academy—The Army—The Navy—The Air Force—Territorial Army—National Cadet Corps</p>	93—105
<p>IX ECONOMIC STRUCTURE National and Per Capita Income—Working Force—Pattern of Rural Economy—Prices and Cost of Living</p>	106—122
<p>X FIVE YEAR PLAN Objectives—Distribution of Expenditure—Progress of Plan</p>	123—143
<p>XI CURRENCY, BANKING AND INSURANCE Fight Against Inflation—Reserve Bank—Insurance</p>	144—148
<p>XII PUBLIC FINANCE Funds and Accounts—Income-tax and Estate Duty—Central Budget—Public Debt</p>	149—159
<p>XIII AGRICULTURE Area and Soil—Rainfall and Irrigation—Land Tenure—Land Revenue—Holdings—Crop Production—Grow More Food Campaign—Animal Husbandry—Forestry—Marketing—Fisheries—Research</p>	160—186
<p>XIV LAND REFORM Abolition of Intermediary Rights—Tenancy Reform—Ceiling on Holdings—Sub-Division and Fragmentation—Co-operative Farming—Bhoodan Movement</p>	187—200
<p>XV COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Objectives—Finance—National Extension Service</p>	201—209
<p>XVI CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT Co-operative Societies—Banking Unions and Central Banks—Agricultural Societies—Non-agricultural Societies—Review of the Movement—Rural Credit Survey</p>	210—220
<p>XVII POWER AND IRRIGATION Progress of Power Generation—Rural Electrification—Organisation for Power Development—Power Projects Under Planning and Execution—Growth of Irrigation—River Valley Projects</p>	221—247

XXVIII	INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE Industrial Production—Industrial Policy—Investment and Finance—Research and Standardisation—Cottage Industries—India's Foreign Trade	288-307
XIX	SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH Council of Scientific and Industrial Research—National Laboratories—Atomic Energy Commission	288-307
XX	TRANSPORT Railways—Roads—Inland Waterways—Shipping—Ports—Tourist Traffic—Civil Aviation	308-323
XXI	POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS Posts—Telephones—Telegraphs	324-331
XXII	EDUCATION Primary and Basic Education—Secondary Education—Higher Education—Technical and Professional Education—Social Education—Development of Hindi—Scholarship Schemes	332-358
XXIII	PRESS AND FILMS The Press—Report of the Press Commission—Films	359-368
XXIV	BROADCASTING Programme Policy—Community Broadcasts—Five Year Plan—News Services Division	369-375
XXV	CULTURAL ACTIVITIES Sangeet Natak Akadami—Sahitya Akadami—Lalit Kala Akadami—Children's Welfare Activities—India and UNESCO—Cultural Exchanges	376-385
XXVI	HEALTH Five Year Plan—Indigenous System of Medicine—Contributory Health Service—Medical Education—Research—Prevention and Control of Diseases—Population Control	386-401
XXVII	LABOUR Absenteeism—National Employment Service—Trade Unions—Industrial Disputes—Labour Legislation—Agricultural Labour Inquiry—Employees' State Insurance—Labour Welfare	402-418
XXVIII	SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES AND BACKWARD CLASSES General Safeguards—Legislative Safeguards—Administrative Safeguards—Education and other Welfare Schemes—Special Provisions in the Constitution	419-438
XXIX	REHABILITATION Displaced Persons from West Pakistan—Compensation—Displaced Persons from East Pakistan	439-448
XXX	PART A STATES	449-458
XXXI	PART B STATES	459-468
XXXII	PART C STATES AND PART D TERRITORIES	469-478
XXXIII	LAWS OF THE YEAR	479-488
XXXIV	SPORTS	489-498
XXXV	CHRONICLE OF EVENTS	499-508
XXXVI	GENERAL INFORMATION Warrant of Precedence—Awards and Distinctions—First in India—Hill Stations—Highest Mountain—Longest Bridges—Weights and Measures—Diplomatic and Trade Representations Abroad—Foreign Diplomats in India	509-518
	APPENDICES	519-528
	INDEX	529-538

CHAPTER XXIII
PRESS AND FILMS

THE PRESS

For the first time an exhaustive enquiry into every aspect of the working of the Press in India was undertaken by the Press Commission appointed by the Government of India in September 1952. At the very outset the Commission found that the statistics for newspapers and periodicals were grossly inaccurate. The figures available related mostly to the number of newspapers for which declarations under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, had been filed, but many of these had either never come out or had ceased publication shortly afterwards. This explains the discrepancy between the figures for the daily newspapers and periodicals published in *INDIA 1954* and those estimated by the Press Commission.

Daily Newspapers

The Commission stated that there are about 330 newspapers currently published in India with a circulation of just over 25 lakhs. The following table gives the number of daily newspapers published in the major languages of India along with their circulation :

TABLE CLVI
NUMBER AND CIRCULATION OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS

Language	Number of papers	Circulation (lakhs)
English	41	6.97
Hindi	76	3.79
Assamese	1	0.03
Bengali	7	2.40
Gujarati	23	1.87
Kannada	25	0.72
Malayalam	21	1.96
Marathi	26	1.91
Oriya	3	0.43
Punjabi	9	0.23
Tamil	12	1.60
Telugu	6	0.90
Urdu	70	2.13
English and major Indian languages	320	25.10
Minor Indian languages	9	0.15
Chinese	1	0.005
TOTAL ..	330	25.255

The State-wise distribution of the daily newspapers together with the population of each State is given below :

TABLE CLVII

State	Population (in lakhs)	Total number of daily newspapers	English papers	Indian language papers ^(a)
✓ Assam	90	2	1	1
✓ Bihar	402	9	2	7
✓ Bombay	360	69	8	61
✓ Madhya Pradesh	212	11	2	9
✓ Madras	570	25	4	21
✓ Orissa	146	4	1	3
✓ Punjab	12	21	1	20
✓ Uttar Pradesh	632	49	6	43
✓ West Bengal	248	26	4	22 ^(b)
Hyderabad	187	17	4	13
Madhya Bharat	80	9	..	9
✓ Mysore	91	25	2	23
PEPSU	35	2	..	2
✓ Rajasthan	153	6	..	6
Saurashtra	41	3	..	3
Travancore-Cochin	93	19	..	19
Ajmer	7	6	..	6
Bhopal	8	3	..	3
✓ Delhi	17	19	6	13
Kutch	6	3	..	3
✓ Manipur	6	2	..	2
TOTAL		330	41	289 ^(b)

The daily newspapers are published mostly from the metropolitan cities and the larger capitals. Of the total, nearly 90 newspapers are published from four cities, *viz.*, Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. Another 80 newspapers are published from the capitals of Part A, B and C States. Over 110 newspapers are published from towns with a population of over 1,00,000 and less than 50 newspapers from towns of smaller size. The circulation is concentrated in the bigger towns and, a market has still to be developed in the rural areas.

(a) Includes minor Indian languages, such as Sindhi, Manipuri, etc.
 (b) Includes one Chinese.

The total proprietary capital invested in the newspaper industry has been estimated at about Rs. 7 crore and the loaned capital at about Rs. 5 crore. The annual revenue of the industry comes to about Rs. 11 crore of which about Rs. 5 crore are derived from advertisements. The salaries and wages paid in the industry are over Rs. 4 crore, of which about Rs. 85 lakh go to the journalists.

Weeklies, Monthlies and other Periodicals

The Press Commission also examined the number of weeklies, monthlies and other periodicals published in India. The following statistics in this connection were submitted to the Commission by the State Governments.

TABLE CLVIII
PERIODICALS PUBLISHED (AS ON JANUARY, 1954)

Language	Bi-weeklies and tri-weeklies	Weeklies	Fortnightlies	Monthlies	Quarterlies	Other periodicals
Assamese .. ..	..	12	..	5	8	20
Bengali ..	5	11	33	142	14	96
English ..	10	138	84	38	172	304
Gujarati ..	1	80	39	167	7	34
Hindi ..	7	273	74	299	40	79
Kannada ..	3	63	4	62	5	7
Malayalam ..	..	34	5	47	1	19
Marathi ..	13	95	27	127	11	33
Oriya ..	..	16	8	27	7	33
Punjabi ..	2	25	1	37	2	3
Tamil ..	2	79	42	148	7	18
Telugu ..	3	72	25	82	4	18
Urdu ..	5	164	32	125	5	19
Other minor Indian languages ..	..	27	5	30	..	105
TOTAL ..	51	1,189	379	1,685	283	788

News Agencies

News agencies provide news reports on current events to the newspapers and other subscribers. There are six world news agencies in India. They are : (1) the Reuters of the United Kingdom; (2) Agence France Presse of France; (3) Associated Press of America; (4) United Press of America; (5) International News Service of the United States and;

(6) Tass of the Soviet Union. There are other smaller international news agencies like the Central News Agency of China, the Globe (Near and Far East News Agency) and the Arab News Agency. At present there are only two major Indian agencies—the Press Trust of India and the United Press of India. The Hindustan Samachar is another small agency.

The Press Information Bureau

Information about the Government's activities is supplied to the press by the Press Information Bureau of the Government of India and the Publicity Directorates in the States. The Press Information Bureau sends material to 2,560 Indian newspapers and periodicals in nine languages viz., English, Hindi, Urdu, Gujerati, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Bengali and Marathi. Another four languages, namely, Assamese, Oriya, Malayalam and Punjabi are to be added to this list shortly. Correspondents representing Indian and foreign newspapers, news agencies, feature syndicates and broadcasting systems are also served by the Bureau.

The Bureau supplies news-photographs to 27 English and 38 Indian language newspapers and periodicals, 43 official agencies and 5 foreign news and photo agencies. In addition, 49 weeklies and other periodicals receive photographs on subjects of special interest to them. In 1954, an ebonoid block service was started and about 200 newspapers and journals were served by this agency. The Bureau has branch offices in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Jullundur, Bangalore and Lucknow, the last two having been opened in 1954. Each office serves the requirements of the Press in the region and provides services in English and in the main regional language or languages.

Report of the Press Commission

The main recommendations of the Press Commission, embodied in a preliminary summary, were released by the Government of India on July 26, 1954. The detailed report was released later. On December 22, 1954, the Minister for Information and Broadcasting laid on the table of both Houses of Parliament a statement containing the factual position regarding the consideration of certain recommendations of the Press Commission by his Ministry. The following is a very brief summary of the main recommendations of the Commission and of the Government of India's tentative decisions on them:

Press Registrar

The Press Commission has recommended the appointment of a Press Registrar who should be responsible for the compilation of facts and figures relating to the newspaper industry. It should be made incumbent on each newspaper and periodical to file certain returns with the Registrar. The returns should include details of the capital structure of the paper and the names of staff in responsible positions. Periodical returns about employees, consumption of material, changes in ownership and management and circulation should also be submitted. The Registrar should bring out an annual report on the working of the Press. The report should, among other things, discuss working conditions in the industry, and the concentration of ownership.

The Government has accepted this recommendation and is examining the question of amendment of the existing Press and Registration of Books Act and the creation of an appropriate machinery for the registration of papers.

Press Council

To ensure a high standard of journalism and to censure persons guilty of unethical conduct, a Press Council principally composed of people connected with the industry should be set up. Besides fostering healthy traditions in the press, the Council will protect it from external pressure.

The Press Council will consist of men who command general confidence and respect in the profession. It should have 25 members excluding the Chairman who must be Judge of a High Court nominated by the Chief Justice of India. At least 13 members of the Council should be working journalists, including working editors, and the remaining should represent newspaper proprietors, universities, literary bodies, etc. The professional members should be of at least 10-years' standing.

The underlying principle that the body should consist predominantly of the representatives of the industry undertaking the responsibility for self-regulation has been accepted by the Government. The composition and the method of financing of the Council are at present under consideration.

Working Journalists

The definition of the word "employee" in the Industrial Disputes Act should be extended to include within its purview working journalists as well as employees on the managerial side. Alternatively a provision may be made in the proposed Newspapers and Periodicals Act making the new industrial relations legislation applicable to newspaper employees. This would enable the journalists to better protect their rights.

Provisions regarding notice period, bonus, minimum wages, leave, provident fund and gratuity should also be embodied in the same legislation.

The journalists should be given a minimum basic wage of Rs. 125 per month and dearness allowance. They should also be entitled to provident fund, different kinds of leave, and a gratuity on the basis of 15 days' pay for every year of service.

The Government has accepted the principle of extending the provisions of the existing Industrial Disputes Act to the working journalists, and a draft Bill on the subject is proposed to be placed before Parliament very soon.

Recommendations in respect of other service conditions are under consideration.

Other Recommendations

Amongst the other recommendations of the Commission, mention may be made of the following:

(a) The publication of newspapers and periodicals should be made the responsibility of the Centre.

(b) The new Press Act should include a section making the issue of fraudulent advertisements a criminal offence.

(c) A State Trading Corporation should be set up to import all newsprint. It should take over the entire output of Indian mills also and sell it along with imported newsprint at equated prices.

(d) A price page schedule for newspapers should be introduced, and

advertisements should not cover more than 40 per cent of the space in a newspaper. On the basis of the prevailing cost of production, a price of 3 pies per page for both English and Indian language papers of standard size has been suggested.

(e) The management of the news agencies, namely, the P.T.I. and U.P.I., should be organised under a Board of Trustees. In addition, the P.T.I. should be managed as a public corporation and its chairman should be appointed by the Chief Justice of India. In both agencies, the Boards of Trustees should have a representative of the employees.

(f) Accreditation Committees should be set up by the Central and State Governments in consultation with different organisations of pressmen. The existing Press Advisory Committees and Consultative Committees in the States should be abolished.

(g) The tendency towards concentration in the ownership of newspapers is an unhealthy trend and should be discouraged. The proposed Press Registrar should keep a close watch on this development and should bring it to the notice of the Press Council.

(h) Whenever possible, every paper should be constituted as a separate unit so that its profits and losses can be definitely ascertained. In the case of multiple editions, separate cost accounts should be kept in respect of each.

The Government has expressed its agreement with most of these recommendations and has brought them to the notice of the organisations concerned. Implementation of these recommendations is under the active consideration the Central Government.

Freedom of Press

Article 19 (1) of the Constitution guarantees "the right to freedom of speech and expression" to all citizens. Under the Constitution (First Amendment) Act of 1951, Parliament can pass legislation reasonably restricting the exercise of this right "in the interest of the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to offence." The words "reasonable restriction" make such legislation justiciable.

The Press (Objectionable Matter) Act of 1951, which came into force on February 1, 1952, for two years in the first instance and was extended for a similar period on expiry, repealed those provisions of the Provincial or State Acts which provided for pre-censorship or imposed restrictions on the printing, publication or distribution of a newspaper, news-sheet, book or other documents. The Act also abolished pre-censorship of newspapers and provided that no security could be demanded from a newspaper before it started publication. Further, it provided for judicial trial instead of executive action. The respondent has the right of trial by a jury composed of persons with journalistic experience or associated with printing presses and the right of appeal to the High Court.

FILMS

The progress of the Indian film industry was insignificant until about 1930. The footage of foreign films exhibited in India at that time was about seven times the Indian output, and films from the U.S.A. accounted for about 80 per cent of the imported footage. The advent of the talkies, however, gave the Indian film industry a new opportunity. Enjoying

the natural advantage of the language, the Indian film industry began to develop rapidly. In 1931, the number of feature films produced in India was about 28; it increased to 83 in 1932; 103 in 1933; 164 in 1934; and 233 in 1935. Thereafter, it was stabilised at about 170 films per year. In 1945, because of the increasing restrictions on the import of raw films, the figure dropped to 99. The end of the war, however, again witnessed a sudden spurt of activity in production, and during the past few years about 240 new films were released annually.

The following table gives a detailed statement of the number of feature films produced in the country in different languages since 1931-54:

TABLE CLIX
FEATURE FILMS PRODUCED IN INDIAN LANGUAGES (1931-54)

Year	Hindi	Gu- jarati	Ma- rathi	Ben- gali	Ta- mil	Tel- ugu	Kan- arese	Pun- jabi	Mal- aya- lam	Oth- ers	Total
1931	23	..	..	3	1	1	..	..	..	..	28
1932	61	2	8	5	4	2	..	..	..	1	83
1933	75	..	6	9	7	5	..	..	..	1	103
1934	121	1	11	10	14	3	2	..	..	2	164
1935	154	1	9	19	38	7	1	1	..	3	233
1936	135	3	6	19	38	12	1	1	..	2	217
1937	102	..	11	16	37	10	3	..	..	..	179
1938	88	..	14	19	39	10	..	1	1	..	172
1939	82	1	12	15	35	12	..	7	..	1	165
1940	86	1	10	16	36	14	..	7	1	..	171
1941	79	1	14	18	34	16	2	2	1	3	170
1942	97	..	13	18	19	8	2	5	..	1	163
1943	108	..	5	21	13	6	4	..	..	2	159
1944	86	..	4	14	13	6	..	2	..	1	126
1945	73	..	..	9	11	5	1	..	..	..	99
1946	155	1	2	15	16	10	..	1	..	..	200
1947	186	11	6	38	29	6	5	..	..	7	288
1948	148	28	7	37	32	7	2	1	1	2	265
1949	157	17	15	62	21	7	6	1	1	2	289
1950	115	13	19	42	19	18	1	4	6	4	241
1951	100	6	16	38	26	20	2	4	7	2	221
1952	102	2	17	43	32	25	1	..	11	..	233
1953	97	..	21	50	42	29	7	3	7	4	260
1954	118	..	18	48	37	27	10	3	8	5	274

of people of Indian origin. Some Indian films are sent to the Middle Eastern countries also.

Children's Films.

The Committee recommended that the Films Divisions of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry might take up the production of films for schools. The Government has accepted this recommendation and is setting up two units in the Films Division to produce 12 films per year on basic and social education. It is also setting up a body, under the Societies' Registration Act, for the production of special films for children. The Government will give grants-in-aid to this society and subsidise the production of films.

Finance Corporation

The setting up of a Film Finance Corporation was also recommended by the Committee. The Government has not been able to accept this recommendation in view of the more urgent commitments it has under the Five Year Plan.

Entertainment Tax

The question of uniform rates of entertainment tax and the method of assessing them are under the consideration of the Government.

Film Awards

The Committee recommended that "departmentalised" awards should be given for best acting, best technical effort, etc. The Government has accepted this recommendation in a slightly modified form and has instituted the following annual awards to encourage the production of films of high aesthetic and technical standard as well as educational and cultural value :

- (a) Regional Awards for the best feature films in different linguistic groups;
- (b) An All-India Award for the best documentary film;
- (c) An All-India Award for the best feature film; and
- (d) An All-India Award for the best children's film.

In addition to these awards, the Government of India has also decided that certificates of merit be accorded to two feature films, documentaries and children's films. No film will receive more than one award.

Awards in 1954

Awards for the best films produced in the country in 1953 were given at a special ceremony, held in the National Physical Laboratory Auditorium, New Delhi, on October 10, 1954.

The President's Gold Medal for the best feature film was won by *Shyamchi Ai* (Marathi), produced by Atre Pictures. *Do Bigha Zamin* (Hindi) of Bimal Roy Productions and *Bhagwan Shri Krishan Chaitanya* (Bengali) by Debaki Bose Productions were awarded Certificates of Merit. Among the documentaries *Mahabalipuram* received the President's Gold Medal and the *Tree of Wealth* and *Holy Himalayas* got Certificates of Merit. All these were produced by the Films Division of the Government of India. The children's film, *Khela Ghar* (Bengali) of the Aurora Films, received a Certificate of Merit. None of the entries in

this section was considered to be of a sufficiently high standard to merit the award of the Prime Minister's Gold Medal.

Raw Film Manufacture

Regarding the recommendation for the manufacture of raw films, there is a proposal by a private firm to set up a factory in Mysore in collaboration with a foreign enterprise. If this proposal is not taken up by the private sector during the current Five Year Plan, the Government will re-examine the question of manufacturing raw films in the country.

A scheme for the manufacture of projectors has been approved by the Government.

Other Recommendations

The Government has taken action on a number of other recommendations made by the Committee. For instance, cinema houses have been given the right of appeal against the decisions of the licensing authorities.

The ban imposed in 1948 on the construction of new cinema houses has been removed without prejudice to the requirements of projects of higher priority.

Documentaries and Newsreels

Documentaries and newsreels are produced mainly by the Films Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. This Division was first set up in February 1943 to produce films for war publicity. It was, however, disbanded soon after the end of hostilities in April 1946. With the attainment of independence, the Division was revived in 1948.

The offices of the Films Division are located in Bombay. The head of the organisation is known as the Chief Producer. He is assisted by an Administrative and Publicity Section and a number of technical experts such as Assistant Producers, Directors, Cameramen, Commentary Writers, Sound Recordists, Music Director, Editorial Staff, Script Writers, etc.

Production Programme

The Films Division produces, on an average, one newsreel a week and about 42 documentaries a year. Up to the end of the year 1954, it had produced 324 newsreels and released 230 documentaries for exhibition. All the films for internal circulation are produced in five languages, viz., Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu and English. They are made in 35mm. standard size of an average length of 1,000 feet. A few copies of the documentaries are also made in 16mm. size for external publicity and for use by the mobile vans of the State Governments, etc. News items are covered by seven cameramen stationed in different parts of the country. In addition to items of topical interest, newsreels include subjects of special interest to the rural audience. Special emphasis is laid on schemes relating to food production and development projects in the country. Besides the weekly newsreel, a monthly edition is also produced for exhibition abroad. By an arrangement with some foreign newsreel companies, facilities have been made available for the exhibition of important Indian newsreels abroad.

Documentaries are produced on different aspects of India's life, history, culture, art, industry, agriculture, public health, hygiene, current economic and social problems, etc. While the bulk of the documentaries

are produced by the Films Division, private producers are also entrusted with the production of films on selected subjects. Between 1952 and 1954 six such films were produced by private companies. In addition, 15 ready-made films were purchased from them during the years 1950-54. Most of the films are produced in black and white, but colour films are also made occasionally. The following table gives the details regarding documentary films released by the Films Division between 1948 and 1954.

TABLE CLXI

DOCUMENTARY FILMS RELEASED BY THE FILMS DIVISION

Year	No. of films produced by Films Division	No. of ready-made films purchased from private producers	No. of films produced by private producers to order	No. of films received from other agencies, e.g. U.N. and foreign Govts.	No. of films received from State Govts.	Total No. of films released
1948	3	..	..	..	..	3
1949	24	..	..	4	..	28
1950	36 (including one in colour)	2	..	1	..	39
1951	33	5	..	..	..	38
1952	31	2	1	5	..	39
1953	35 (including two in colour)	3 (including one in colour)	2	1	1	42
1954	33 (including two in colour)	3	3	1	1	41

Distribution of Films to Cinemas

By a condition inserted in their licences, the cinemas in India are required to show a minimum footage of films approved by the Central or State Governments. Contracts exist with almost all the cinemas in the country under which they are required to exhibit the films produced by the Films Division on payment of rentals ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 150 per week. These work out to one to two per cent of the gross collections of the cinemas.

The work of regular distribution of films to the cinema houses is undertaken by the Distribution Section of the Division and its five branch offices situated at Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow and Nagpur. The branch offices arrange for the release of one newsreel and one documentary a week to all cinema houses by rotation. Non-commercial distribution of 16 mm. films to schools, colleges, factories and other institution is also handled by these offices.

Revenue and Expenditure

The following figures give the income and expenditure of the Films Division for the years 1949-50 to 1953-54. The most important single source of income of the Division is from the rentals charged from the cinema houses.

TABLE CLXII
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE FILMS DIVISION

(In lakhs of rupees)

Year	Total income	Total expenditure
1949-50	9.05	29.23
1950-51	22.31	31.54
1951-52	2	33.31
1952-53	34.48	37.76
1953-54	35.28	38.90

External Publicity

Selected documentaries and monthly round-up of the newswreath are sent to the Indian Missions abroad for non-commercial exhibition. The number of such Missions on the mailing list of the Division was 47 in 1953-54. Indian documentaries are also used in television circuits in the U.K. the U.S.A. and France. Arrangements also exist for the distribution of films through commercial channels in a number of countries.

The films produced by the Division are regularly sent for exhibition at international film festivals. They are also shown in international conferences, fairs and exhibitions. A number of films have gained international recognition. At the Film Festival in Czechoslovakia, in 1949, the documentary, *Ten of Wealth*, was awarded a prize. It was later awarded the "Silver Emblem" at the International Exhibition of Agricultural Films held in Rome in 1953. At the Canadian International Films Festival in 1950 three documentaries, *Private Life of the Silkweaver*, *Jaipur* and *Indian Minerals* won awards of merit. The documentary on Jaipur also won the first prize in the Folklore and Landscape Section of the Documentary Films Festival held at Venice in 1951.

Publicity for Five Year Plan

Additional units have recently been set up in the Films Division in connection with the Five Year Plan. These units will produce 32 films a year to meet the requirements of the Planning Commission, the Community Projects Administration, and the Basic and Social Education schemes of the Government of India. These films will be produced in 12 regional languages and will be supplied to the State Governments for exhibition through their mobile vans. They will also be exhibited in cinema houses and through the field publicity organisation of the Five Year Plan Publicity Section of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Film Censorship

The Central Board of Film Censors was constituted on January 13, 1951, as a single censoring authority for the certification of films for the