

(a) whether in comparison to Doordarshan programmes, the programmes of foreign T.V. networks have become popular in the country;

(b) if so, whether the quality of Doordarshan programmes has been declining;

(c) whether the Government have conducted any survey in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to improve the quality of Doordarshan Programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir. Such surveys are regularly done by Doordarshan.

(d) The surveys have revealed that the programmes of Doordarshan continue to enjoy high viewership. On its part Doordarshan constantly strives to bring about a qualitative improvement in its programmes in order to sustain the interest of its viewers.

Indo-UAE Joint Commission

*67. DR. K.D. JESWANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the meeting of Indo-UAE Joint Commission was held recently; and

(b) if so, the subjects that figured in the meeting and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The Seventh Session of the Indo-UAE Joint Commission was held in New Delhi from January 4-6, 1994.

(b) The Joint Commission discussed in detail a wide range of issues relating to investment, trade, economic and manpower matters and interaction in the areas of water & telecommunications, banking, education & information and media exchanges.

Agreements on counter trafficking in Narcotic drugs and the Cultural Exchange Programme for 1994-96 were signed by the two sides. The Narcotic Agreement which provides for exchange of information and other cooperation between the designated agencies of the two sides, is the first which India has signed with any Arab country. The Cultural Exchange Programme comprises a specific annual action plan for cooperation in the fields of education, including higher education, art, culture, tourism, information, mass media and sports.

Technical discussions were held and considerable headway was made on a bilateral treaty dealing with extradition. Follow-up action on areas of cooperation agreed to is continuing.

Talks with Pakistan

*68. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH:

SHRI RAJESH KUMAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Foreign Secretary level

talks were held with Pakistan during January, 1994;

(b) if so, the bilateral issues figured in the talks and the outcome thereof;

(c) the follow-up action taken by the Government on the outcome;

(d) whether any talks are proposed to be held between the two countries in near future; and

(e) if so, the time by which these talks are likely to be held and at what level?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b) The Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan met at Islamabad from 1-3 January, 1994. At these talks, the entire range of bilateral issues including differences related to the Jammu and Kashmir issue were discussed.

(c) On 24 January, 1994 Government forwarded to Pakistan six non-papers containing specific and constructive proposals on Siachen, Sir Creek, a draft agreement on maintenance of peace and tranquillity along the Line of Control, additional Confidence Building Measures and India-Pakistan Joint Commission.

(d) and (e) At the Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan held at Islamabad from 1-3 January, 1994, the two sides reiterated the need to engage in a bilateral dialogue. Government expressed its readiness to draw a schedule for further talks. Pakistan, however, was unwilling to commit itself to any time-frame for further talks and attempted to link the scheduling

of future talks with the ground situation in J&K including the level of security forces deployed against terrorists in J&K and discussion on the modalities of a plebiscite, which Government have consistently regarded as unacceptable.

During the period since the Foreign Secretary level talks concluded, Pakistan has indulged in a highly provocative propaganda campaign against India and has stepped up its efforts to internationalise the J&K issue. This has vitiated the climate of relations and has a negative impact on the bilateral process.

Telephones in Metropolitan Cities

*69. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE:
SHRI ANKUSHRAO RAO-SAHEB TOPE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of people in the metropolitan cities are in the waiting list for telephone connections;

(b) if so, the details thereof in regard to every metropolitan city as on December 31, 1993;

(c) the prospects of providing telephone connections to those people; and

(d) the steps taken to expedite the allotment of telephone connections in the metropolitan cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.