

(b) and (c). No, Sir. Telephone faults reported by subscribers are booked and attended to promptly. Some times, delay occurs due to a large scale break-down of external plants in a system when all resources available are diverted for quick restoration.

A continuous watch is being kept and the quality of service is being monitored. A special programme has been launched for overhauling the telephone exchanges, equipments and plants. It is expected that the service will gradually improve further.

Proposal for National Minimum Wage Policy in Cashew Industry

2284. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate a national minimum wage policy in the Cashew Industry with a view to reduce the smuggling of raw nuts from one State to another; and

(b) if so, when and the main features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) and (b). No, Sir. Fixation of minimum wages in the Cashew Industry under the Minimum Wages Act falls in the State sphere.

Indo-Bangladesh Agreement on Distribution of Ganga Waters

2285. SHRI S. R. DAMANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the former West Bengal Chief Minister and the Chairman of the Calcutta Port Trust had expressed disappointment with the terms of the agreement reached with Bangladesh on the distribution of Ganga Waters;

(b) if so, what is the stand taken by them; and

(c) whether their views were made known to the Government of India earlier to the agreement; and, if so, the circumstances which led to by-passing of their views?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) to (c). The former Chief Minister of West Bengal and the Chairman of the Calcutta Port Trust have expressed their concern regarding the lower discharge of water from the Farakka Barrage into the Hooghly river in the lean period of 1977 as compared to 1976. In this connection, reference has been made to the understanding reached with Bangladesh on the Farakka question at the Ministerial level talks held in Dacca from 15—18 April, 1977. The stand taken by them has been that a flow into the Hooghly of 40,000 cusecs of water, equal to the capacity of the Feeder Canal, would be necessary for improving the navigability of the river and the port of Calcutta.

The Government of India have been in touch with the West Bengal Government as well as other agencies, and their views have been duly taken into account. It is, of course, well known that as there is not enough water in the Ganga to meet the optimum requirements of both the countries during some months, each of them would have to make sacrifice in an attempt to reach an agreement on the sharing of the lean season flow and to facilitate in the long term the augmentation of the flow to meet the requirements of the Calcutta Port.

Amendment to Drugs and Cosmetics Act

2286. SHRI P. K. KODIYAN:

SHRI S. G. MURUGAIYAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal under consideration to amend

the present Drugs and Cosmetics Act; and

(b) if so, the facts and objectives thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAJ NARAIN): (a) Yes.

(b) Some of the salient features of the amendments proposed in the draft bill are:—

(i) revised definition of spurious drugs;

(ii) scheme of penalties being modified on rational basis.

Minimum and maximum penalties provided for more serious offences;

(iii) provision for life imprisonment has been made where it is proved that the use of an adulterated spurious or sub-standard drug has caused grievous hurt or death;

(iv) the powers of Drugs Inspectors are being enhanced to enable them to check the trade in spurious drugs;

(v) the constitution of the Drugs Advisory Committee is being made mandatory on the part of the States. Representatives from the consumers will be in the Committee along with medical representatives and the Central Government;

(vi) the Central Government is being empowered to prohibit the import, manufacture, sale or distribution of a drug, which is considered injurious to health or ineffective therapeutically;

(vii) provision is being made for certain offences punishable under the Act with imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years to be tried in a summary way by a First Class Judicial Magistrate.

The object of laying down new provision in the draft bill and amending existing provisions is to ensure a rigid

control over the quality of drugs and penalise the persons involved in the trade in spurious drugs, adulterated and sub-standard drugs in the interest of public health.

इस्पात के निर्यात में वृद्धि

2287. श्री हरगोविन्द वर्मा : क्या इस्पात और खान मंत्री यह बताने की वृत्ति करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार का विचार इस्पात का निर्यात बढ़ाने का है, और

(ख) यदि हाँ, तो कितना और सरकार किन देशों को इसका निर्यात करना चाहती है ?

इस्पात और खान मंत्री (श्री बीजू पटनायक) (क) जी, हाँ ।

(ख) वर्ष 1977-78 के लिए इस्पात के निर्यात का लक्ष्य 24.1 लाख टन रखा गया है इसके मुकाबले में वर्ष 1976-77 में वास्तविक निर्यात 14 लाख टन हुआ था । जिन देशों को निर्यात किया जाएगा वह इस बात पर निर्भर करेगा कि अंतर्राष्ट्रीय बाजार की स्थिति क्या है तथा विभिन्न देशों की मांग क्या है ।

Unemployment Allowance

2288. SHRI F. H. MOHSIN: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Janata Party had promised to pay unemployment allowance to all the unemployed persons in the country; and

(b) if so, an outline of the scheme and when it is likely to commence?