

(a) the expenditure incurred so far on his foreign visits and of other officials in the Ministry during the last three months; and

(b) the outcome of these visits?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Details regarding expenditure on my visits abroad during January-February-March 1990 and visits of other official during this period are being compiled and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) During the last three months, I visited Maldives, Bangladesh, Yugoslavia, Brussels and Tunisia.

My first visit as External Affairs Minister was to Maldives, a country with which India enjoys the closest of relations. This visit was in the context of the first-ever meeting of the Indo-Maldives Joint Economic Commission which considered a number of issues of bilateral cooperation. This first visit outside India signified the importance the Government attaches to our relations with neighbouring countries.

My second visit abroad, in February, 1990, was to Bangladesh, at the invitation of their Foreign Minister. My discussions with Bangladeshi leaders were held in a very cordial and constructive atmosphere.

In March 1990, during my visit to Brussels for the Annual Political Consultations with the TROIKA Foreign Ministers, discussions were held on bilateral and International issues of mutual concern and ways and means of strengthening Indo-EEC cooperation.

During my visit to Belgrade at the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, which is the current Chairman of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), I met their President Prime Minister and held detailed dis-

cussions with the Foreign Minister on Indo-Yugoslav bilateral relations, the role of NAM in the changing international situation, international economic cooperation, Disarmament and the forthcoming Special Session of NAM.

I visited Tunis, 10-12 March 1990, for the Ministerial Meeting of the NAM Committee of Nine on Palestine. The Meeting considered all the major aspects of the Palestine question. In Tunisia, I also had detailed discussions with President Arafat and Foreign Minister Kaddoumi of Palestine, and also met the Prime Minister of Tunisia and the Foreign Ministers of Tunisia, Egypt, Cuba, Senegal, Sudan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq and Algeria.

During the last three months, the Foreign Secretary visited Moscow, Washington and New York, London and Kathmandu. These visits were for diverse purposes and with different objectives and helped in fostering greater understanding and appreciation of India's point of view of various bilateral regional, and international issues of mutual interest.

Opening of Telegraph Office at Vithan Bazar Post Office

4774. SHRI DASAI CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no telegraph office at Vithan Bazar post office in Samastipur district of Bihar; and

(b) if so, when Government propose to open a telegraph office at Vithan Bazar in public interest?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) and (b). In the Vithan Bazar Combined Post

Office and telegraph office, telegraph facilities for the public are already available on phonocom basis. The traffic however, is not adequate to introduce Morse working.

Use of Hindi in Ministries/Departments

4775. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of officers and staff in Ministries, Departments and Public Undertakings who have received training in Hindi, during the last three years and the percentage of those who are yet to be so trained and the problems being faced in imparting this training to them;

(b) the progress made in the use of Hindi in different departments during the last three years and the steps taken to accelerate it;

(c) whether there is shortage of modern typewriters and other equipment in Devnagri in different Ministries/Departments;

(d) if so, facts and the details thereof; and

(e) the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED): (a) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House on receipt.

(b) During the last three years, various Ministries/Departments have been making all possible efforts to accelerate the use of Hindi in their day-to-day working. While during 1986-87 various Ministries/Departments did about 91% of their work bilingually under Section 3 (3) of the Official Languages Act, the same increased to about 97% during 1988-89. Replies to most of the letters re-

ceived in Hindi were sent in Hindi. The progress regarding the use of Hindi was reviewed in the meetings of Hindi Salahkar Samities and the Official Language Implementation Committees of the various Ministries/Departments and directions given for further accelerating its use. The Kendriya Hindi Samiti, the highest body for laying down guidelines and formulation of policies on official language, in its meeting took significant decisions for promoting the use of Hindi. The Central Official Language Implementation Committee also, in their meeting, reviewed the progress of the Official language and took appropriate decisions on the relevant subjects. The Department of Official Language reviewed the implementation of the Annual Programme through the Quarterly Progress Reports and periodical inspections and finalised the Annual Programme for 1990-91. Keeping in view the progress in the use of Hindi, the targets in the Annual Programme of the said year have been raised. Regional level Official Language conferences and seminars were organised to accelerate the use of Hindi. Under the incentive scheme, various Ministries/Departments etc. implemented their respective awards schemes for maximising the use of Hindi. Awards schemes were made more flexible and liberal. Workshops were also organised by various Ministries/Departments for speeding up the use of Hindi. 120 Town Official Language Implementation Committees constituted in different cities of the country also reviewed the use of Hindi in their respective offices and created an environment for greater use of Hindi. Recently, shields were awarded under the Indira Gandhi Official Language Awards Scheme to some Ministries/Departments/Undertakings/Banks for their outstanding performance in the use of Hindi and all other Ministries/Departments/Undertakings etc. were encouraged to accelerate the use of Hindi. Magazines and other related material were published and distributed by the Department of Official Language to help accelerate the