

changes in schedule, etc.

(b) Whenever flights are cancelled, the affected passengers are accommodated on alternative flights or other modes of transport. Combinations/diversions of flights and transfer to flights operated by other Airlines are also done to facilitate such passengers.

(c) Cancellation of flights is resorted to only when it becomes unavoidable. To the extent stand-by aircraft are arranged to meet such situations.

[*Translation*]

Duration of Local Calls

*74. SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH:
SHRI RAJENDRA
AGNIHOTRI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have introduced meter system on local calls in Delhi and Bombay from June 16, 1992;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it has been felt that the duration of five minutes is too short;

(d) whether it is proposed to increase the duration of the local call from five to ten minutes; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All local calls are metered for every five minutes duration for all subscribers of Electronic Exchanges in Delhi and Bombay.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) The timing of local calls has been introduced mainly to relieve congestion. Increase of call duration from five to ten minutes will not serve this purpose of achieving better efficiency.

Privatisation of Mines

*75. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to privatise some of the mines in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the concerned States have been consulted in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b). Mining is allowed both in public and private sectors. The Government have no proposal to privatise any existing mines in the public sector. However, in case of coal mining which has been nationalised, Government have decided to allow captive coal mines in the private sector especially in respect of thermal power stations and for setting up coal washeries. A bill to amend the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973, for this purpose is likely to be introduced in Parliament during the current session.

(c) and (d). No Sir, However, under the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, it is the State Government who are competent to grant mining lease/prospecting licence; provided that in respect of coal and certain other minerals included in the First Scheduled to the above Act prior approval of the Central Government is taken.