

makkah were received from pilgrims among a group of 2300 out of the total of 25,000 who were allotted accommodation at a distance of about 1500 metres from the Haram Sharif, the rest being accommodated within 1000 meters. Despite the availability of special transport arrangements for these 2300 pilgrims, some of them had difficulty on occasions in reaching the Grand Mosque for prayers, which led to complaints. The more remote location of their lodgings occurred because accommodation arrangements made through a private contractor were not accepted by the Saudi authorities and fresh efforts a had to be made to find the requisite accommodation at a late stage, by which time buildings closer to the Haram Sharif had already been rented out.

There were also complaints from pilgrims about the flight arrangement for the Haj. Uncertainties in Air India's operations necessitated a charter with Aeroflot, which was unable to make adequate arrangements for the baggage of all the returning pilgrims. Subsequently, special arrangements were made to bring their baggage to India and to distribute it to them.

(c) and (d) Government were in continual touch with the Hajees in order to find out their problems as they arose, and to take immediate action on their behalf. Members of the staff in the Consulate General of India, Jeddah, paid visits on a regular basis to accera in the problems faced nbu the pilgrims. The Consulate helped effect liaison between the pilgrims and the Moalims in charge of providing amenities like water, light, air-condition in and proper hygiene conditions at the places of pilgrims' stay.

[English]

Tempering of Telephone mater in Bombay

111. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some employees of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited, Bombay were found involved in the tempering of the telephone mater for specific clientele in the Malabar Hill telephone exchange, in July 1993;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken so far against those employees found guilty?

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

(b) The CBI had registered a case on 9.7.93 against two Assistant Engineers and three Junior Telecom Officers (of Malabar Hill Telephone Exchange) who were involved in tampering telephone metter circuits and mater readings

(c) The above mentioned five officials were arrested on 9.7.93 and released on bail by the court. All of them have been suspended.

Shortage of Power in Hilly Areas of U.P.

112. MAJ. GEN. (READ.) BHUWAN CHANDRA KHANDURI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh particularly pauri Garhwal and Chamoli suffer from acute shortage of power at present;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the per capits power consumption at the national level and that in Himachal Pradesh as compared to the five hill districts of U.P.; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to increase the per-capita power consumption of these hill districts of U.P.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MIN-

ISTRY OF POWER (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) and (b) During the period April 1993-June 1993, the energy shortage in Uttar Pradesh, including hill districts of Pauri Garhwal and Chamoli, was 10.6%. The main reasons for power shortage in Uttar Pradesh are demand out-stripping availability of power and unsatisfactory performance of its Thermal Power Stations.

(c) The per-capita consumption of electricity in the country during 1991-92 was 267.95 Kwh and that in Himachal Pradesh was 209.55 Kwh and in Uttar Pradesh (including five hill districts) was 173.52 Kwh.

(d) The per capita consumption of electricity depends upon the extent of electrification of villages, energisation of pump sets and the extent of industrialisation of the State. Various other measures being taken to increase the availability of power in Uttar Pradesh include maximising generating from existing generating stations, implementation of Renovation and Modernisation Programme, Reduction in Transmission and Distribution losses, effective load management and energy conservation measures and assistance from neighbouring States and Systems.

[*Translation*]

Voluntary Retirement Scheme in DTC

113. SHRI N. J. RATHVA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the irregularities being committed under the voluntary retirement scheme in Delhi Transport Corporation;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of such incidents which have come into the notice of the Government; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to check these irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No Irregularities have been brought to the notice of the Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[*English*]

Talks with Kuwait

114. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Kuwait held any discussions in Kuwait in June 1993 to strengthen their ties in the area of telecommunications; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) The existing cooperation between the two countries in the telecom field will continue. The scope of cooperation was further expanded to include:-

(i) Training of Kuwaiti nationals in India or deputation of Indian Instructors and required by PTT Kuwait, and

(ii) Establishment of manufacturing base of small size exchanges of Indian design.

Telephone Exchanges with ISD/STD in Kerala

115. SHRI MULK LAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN:
SHRI K. M. MATHEW:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges in