

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. However, the situation is the result not only of the programme of the metro channels but also the delay in the availability of new serials under the New Sponsorship Scheme on account of a CBI enquiry and litigation. The amount of free commercial time admissible during the prime time in the evening transmission on the national channel has already been increased to 90 seconds to make the time slots attractive to the sponsors.

### **Indo-Bhutan Relations**

1714. SHRI K. PRADHANI :  
SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government to strengthen further the bilateral relations with Bhutan; and

(b) the salient features of the projects launched in both the countries as a part of Indo-Bhutan joint collaboration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) As a result of the state visit to India of the King of Bhutan, January 4-7, 1993 and of the Prime Minister's goodwill visit to Bhutan, August 21-22, 1993, several initiatives to strengthen bilateral relations have been taken. In the power sector investigations of the Sankosh hydel project and implementation of the Kurichu hydel project began during 1993. A new transit point at Dhubri for Bhutan's exports was opened and new co-operation projects, such as expansion of Paro airport have also begun. The steady progress in all aspects of India-Bhutan relations has expanded the traditionally warm, close and cordial ties

between the two countries.

(b) Among the major co-operation projects assisted by India in Bhutan are hydro power generation at Chukha, power transmission lines, industrial plant at Gidakom, hospitals at Mongar, Lhunsi and Tashiyangtse and rural development at Gaylegphug, telecommunications, road constructions and mining projects. Joint ventures in Bhutan in cement manufacture and other areas are reportedly being discussed by private Indian firms with Bhutanese counterparts.

### **Sanction of Post Offices in Gujarat**

1715. SHRI N.J. RATHVA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some post offices have been sanctioned for Vadodara, Bharuch and Panchmahal districts of Gujarat as per norms and are yet to be opened;

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

(c) the time by which these are likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (c). One post office, namely Halol Industrial Estate of Panchmahal has been approved and has not yet been opened due to non-availability of suitable accommodation. Every effort is being made to find a suitable rented building. No post office was sanctioned to be opened in 1993-94 in Vadodara and Bharuch.

### **Sadiya-Dhabri Stretch of Brahmaputra**

1716. SHRI PROBIN DEKA : Will

the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether schemes have been formulated to boost up inland water transport from Dhabri to Sadiya along the Brahmaputra; and

(b) the time by which the scheme is likely to be cleared and implemented ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Waterway (Sadiya-Dhubri stretch of the Brahmaputra river) Act, 1988 has come into force w.e.f. December, 1988. To boost IWT system, developmental work on this National Waterway was started from the financial year 1989-90 so as to provide a fairway of National Waterway standard. Schemes are sanctioned and implemented every year for undertaking river conservancy works like bandalling, channel marking, hydrographic survey in the stretch Dhubri to Dibrugarh (768 kms.). The development of Dibrugarh—Sadiya (123 Kms.) stretch is envisaged during 9th Plan.

#### **New Post Offices in Bombay**

1717. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of areas in North Bombay where proposals for opening of new post offices are pending alongwith dates where the proposals were submitted;

(b) the steps taken to acquire premises for new post offices in each area;

(c) whether the Government propose to construct the buildings itself or purchase

a building already constructed or acquire the premises for public purpose; and

(d) if not, the other steps the Government propose to take to acquire premises for the new post offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Proposals for sanctioning post offices in Gokuldham and Marolnaka of North Bombay are pending. The proposals were taken up in 1992.

(b) to (d). The State Government has been addressed to help obtain land/buildings in a number of areas including Gokuldham. Where land is made available, construction of buildings will be undertaken, subject to availability of funds and sanction of the post office. Search for suitable buildings would also be made when the post offices are actually sanctioned.

#### **T.V. Transmitters in Kerala**

1718. SHRI KODIKKUNIL SURESH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the total allocation made for the expansion of Doordarshan and All India Radio network in Kerala during 1993-94;

(b) whether the Government has taken any steps for setting more T.V. transmitters in the State and also to expand the capacity of Trivandrum Doordarshan Kendra; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO):

(a) The total allocation made for the expansion of Doordarshan and All India Radio