

Representation by Maharashtra for importing tablets from England

657. SHRI R. K. MHALGI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received representation in the month of March & April 1977 from Maharashtra State seeking permission to import medical tabs from England;

(b) whether the said tablets are useful for ear disease are not available in India;

(c) action Government have taken or propose to take in regard to above representation?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAJ NARAIN): (a) No.

(b) and (c). Does not arise.

Demands of employees of Indian Telephone Industries, Palghat Kerala

658. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of the Indian Telephone Industries, Palghat, Kerala have put forward any demands to the management; and

(b) if so, the outlines thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FER-NANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. The demands have been received last month.

(b) The demands relate mainly to revision of scales of Pay, Dearness Allowance, Leave and Travel Rules etc. These will be duly examined.

Free medical facilities to the poor in Rural Areas

659. SHRI PRADYUMNA BAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

the measures taken by his Ministry to provide free medical facilities to the poor in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAJ NARAIN): The medical and health needs of the people in rural areas are presently being met by a net-work of primary health centres and sub-centres all-over the country. In order to improve such services in the rural areas further, the Government have under consideration a 'Rural Health Scheme' which envisages selection of community health workers by the community. Such community health workers will provide basic preventive, promotive and curative services at the level of the community. This also provides for improvement in the quality of the professional services by way of increasing the number of multi-purpose workers, induction of a large number of doctors in the rural areas and making medical colleges responsible for total health of selected primary health centres. It envisages training of about 5.8 lakh community health workers in a period of two years and training of equal number of dais to look after the deliveries ante-natal and post-natal cares in the rural areas. The details of the scheme are under examination of Finance Ministry and Planning Commission.

Indo-Bangladesh agreement on Ganga Waters

660. SHRI M. KALYANA-SUNDARAM:
SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN:
SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR:
SHRI NIHAR LASKAR:
SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement has been reached on the question of sharing Ganga waters between India and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the salient features of the agreement; and

(c) its effect on the navigation in West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) At the end of the ministerial level talks held in Dacca from 15-18 April 1977, an understanding was reached on elements of a possible agreement between the two countries on this question;

(b) The details of the agreement are still being worked out in official level negotiations between the two countries. In the negotiations held in Delhi from May, 7-11-1977, at the level of officials, considerable ground was covered in an attempt to reach such an agreement;

(c) The Farakka barrage has been constructed with a view to improving the navigability of the Hooghly river for preserving the Port of Calcutta. This aspect has been fully taken into account in the negotiations so far held on this issue.

India's Membership of INTELSAT

661. SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether our country is a member of INTELSAT; and

(b) the advantages for being in that organisation?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FER-NANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) INTELSAT—International Telecommunication Satellite Organization is a commercial organization with its headquarters in Washington, U.S.A., set up for placing satellites into orbit for providing communication facilities. INTELSAT has satellites positioned over the Atlantic,

Pacific and Indian Oceans. India can see and communicate via the Indian Ocean satellite which also is seen by all countries of Europe, Africa and Asia as also Australia. 99 per cent of India's international telephone traffic is now handled via the INTELSAT satellite.

As on 1st March, 1977, INTELSAT had 95 members. Being a member, India has capital investment in INTELSAT which as on 31-3-1977, was of the order of Rs. 1.2 crores. On this, India gets a return of 14 per cent. Further, India has access to all the technical documentation which is useful for building up knowledge in the area of satellite communications. India is also on the international bidders' list of INTELSAT for supply of equipment.

Minimum wages for farm labour

662. SHRI S. G. MURUGAIYAN: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the States which have not implemented yet the laws for payment of minimum wages for farm labour; and

(b) the measures being taken for their speedy implementation?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) Statement I showing the latest position in the matter is laid on the Table of the House. (Placed in Library. See No. LT-363/77).

(b) The enforcement of such minimum wages fall predominantly in the State sphere. State Governments have been advised from time to time take effective steps for implementing the notified minimum wages. Statement II showing the steps taken by the State Governments is laid on the Table of the House. (Placed in Library. See No. LT-363/77).