

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

(b) (i) 9 new small automatic exchanges and 9 long distance public call offices are proposed to be opened.

(ii) Eleven of the existing telephone exchanges are planned to be expanded.

(iii) The manual exchange at Kaira is planned to be automatised.

Effect of Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation on Nations of South-East Asian Region

737. **SHRI D. D. DESAI:** Will the Minister of **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS** be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had assured the Foreign Minister of the USSR during the latter's recent visit to India that the Government of India continues to value the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether this treaty has created any suspicion about Indian initiatives in the South-East Asian Region among the Nations of this region?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) and (b) During the visit to India of Mr. A. A. Gromyko, the Foreign Minister of USSR in April, 1977, the two sides reaffirmed their desire to further strengthen their traditional friendship and co-operation in the spirit of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The Indo-Soviet friendship, which is based on equality, reciprocity and beneficial bilateralism, has stood the test of time and served the interests of the people of the two countries.

(c) No, Sir. Government reiterate that the Indo-Soviet Treaty does not come in the way of the development of India's relations with any country in the world.

Payment of Bonus and withdrawal of Compulsory Deposit Scheme

738. **DR. BAPU KALDATE:** Will the Minister of **PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR** be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation on continuation of bonus and withdrawal of compulsory deposit scheme from organisations of working class and labour unions; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken on these representations?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) Yes.

(b) Decisions in regard to Compulsory Deposit Scheme have already been announced. The question of bonus is under consideration.

Amendment of Schedule 2 of Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970

739. **DR. BAPU KALDATE:** Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to amend Schedule 2 of the Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970; and

(b) if so, the reasons thereof?

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

(b) Does not arise.