

[English]

### Sex-Talks on Phone

5714. SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the advertisements in Newspapers regarding 'Sex-talks' on telephone;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware that advertisements such as "Dial a friend—Enjoy" could pollute the Indian adolescent minds and promote immoral cultural ethos; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to ban such advertisements in the print media?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The matter has been referred to the Press Council of India who have appealed to all the owners and editors of newspapers not to accept such advertisements. Some newspapers have already responded positively to this appeal.

### Auction of F.M. Slots

5715. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state the steps taken by the Prasar Bharati Board in the light of the recent Supreme Court judgement with regard to auction or utilisation of FM-slots in best interest of the nation or catering to entertainment or information needs?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): The Hon'ble Supreme Court has dismissed the special leave petitions filed by three petitioners namely M/s Bennett Coleman & Co., M/s Mid-day Publications and M/s Star Entertainment whereby these petitioners had challenged the decision of High Court of Delhi dated 29.5.98 dismissing their petitions for extension of their licences. Accordingly, Prasar Bharati has decided to operate the F.M. slots through in-house programme till the interim injunctions issued by MRTP Commission and Chennai High Court against opening of the 1998 tenders are

removed and slots are allotted to private operators on the basis of highest bid principle.

### Demands of Indian Newspapers Society

5716. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a delegation of the Indian Newspaper Society met her recently as regards the difficulties being faced by the industry;

(b) if so, the details of submissions and demands made by them; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Indian Newspaper Society (INS) had, *inter alia*, raised demands for higher rates for Government advertisements; clearance of outstanding bills of newspapers on account of Government advertisements; and removal of customs duty on import of newsprint.

(c) The submissions and demands are under consideration of the Government.

### Indo-US Forum on Science & Technology

5717. DR. ASIM BALA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indo-US Forum on Science & Technology has been formed recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof including its areas of operation; and

(c) its implications in the field of Science and Technology?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) A joint statement between the Government of India and the Government of USA was signed in December, 1997 to express an intent to establish an Indo-US Science and Technology Forum envisaging *inter alia*, public and private sector partnerships to accomplish mutually