

Expansion of Internet node is taken up on top priority to clear the waiting list.

[Translation]

#### **Losses Suffered by Postal Department**

5812. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Postal Department is running in losses;

(b) if so, the loss suffered by the Postal Department during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to make good the losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA):

(a) The Department of Posts is not running in losses as such, but has been in deficit.

(b) The deficit of the Department of Posts during the last three years is as under:—

1994-95	Rs. 351.81 crores.
1995-96	Rs. 659.41 crores.
1996-97	Rs. 703.26 crores.

(c) Since the cost of most of the Postal Services is much more than the tariff being charged for these services, the revision of rates in respect of eight Postal Services has been included in the Finance Bill 1998. Besides this measure, steps have also been taken to closely monitor the expenditure on a monthly basis and to improve revenue generation through aggressive marketing of premium postal products and recoveries from other Departments for agency functions performed.

[English]

#### **Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

5813. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the states where facility of mid-day meal is being provided in the schools;

(b) whether the Union Government provide financial assistance to such schools every year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Introduced in August 1995, National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE), popularly known as the Mid-day meal scheme, covers primary school children in the entire country. Under the programme cooked meals are being provided in the States of Gujarat, Kerala, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh and the Union Territory of Pondicherry. Delhi and Chandigarh are providing processed food. All other States and UTs have opted for distribution of foodgrains under the scheme.

(b) Under the scheme, the Central Government provides financial assistance to meet the cost of foodgrains and transportation charges for movement of foodgrains from FCI depots to schools.

(c) Does not arise.

#### **Zonal Cultural Centres**

5814. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a committee was set up to review the functioning of Zonal Cultural Centres;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said committee has submitted its report;

(d) if so, the salient features of the recommendations/suggestions made by the Committee; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The composition of the committee was as follows:—

- (i) Prof. U.R. Ananthamurthy
- (ii) Shri Komal Kothari
- (iii) Shri V.K. Kitchlu
- (iv) Shri Manjeet Bawa