

- (iv) The present analog microwave link between Agartala to Silchar is planned to be replaced by digital media to further improve the STD service.

B. BIRBHUM : The following development activities have been planned during 97-98.

- (i) Total capacity expansion by 5000 lines.
- (ii) Provision of 4500 new telephone connections.
- (iii) Provision of 550 village public telephones.
- (iv) Provision of 150 STD PCOs and 80 local PCOs.
- (v) Commissioning of 8 new telephone exchanges.
- (vi) Extension of STD facility to 11 more exchanges through reliable media.

Telecast of Matches at DD

358. DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Doordarshan is giving less importance to telecast football and Hockey matches of the country as well as international matches;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps to be taken to allot more time to telecast these matches ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) to (c) It is Doordarshan's endeavour to telecast all major National and International sporting events including hockey and football matches where-ever telecast rights are made available to it. As a result of signing an agreement with the Indian Hockey Federation (IHF) and acquiring telecast rights, Doordarshan has been able to telecast almost all major hockey matches/tournaments played in the country in the recent past. Earnest efforts are being made by Doordarshan to sign similar agreements with All India Football Federation (AIFF) and other Sports Associations.

Gauge Conversion

359. SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the names and length of the narrow/metre gauge sections under Northeast Frontier Railway converted into broad-gauge so far;

(b) whether all the converted lines gets clearance for running of goods and passenger trains;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the names of those sections where passenger as well as goods trains have started plying;

(e) whether the Government are considering for introduction of passenger services from those section to other parts of the country; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASVAN) : (a) (i) Guwahati-Dibrugarh (559 kms.)

(ii) Tinsukhia-Lekhapani (64 kms.)

(iii) Chaparmukh-Haibergaon (25 kms.)

(b) Yes, Sir

(c) and (d) Goods trains are running on all the above converted sections. But Passenger trains are running only on Guwahati-Dibrugarh and Chaparmukh-Haibergaon sections.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) 1. 4055/4056 Delhi-Dimapur Brahmaputra Mail has been extended to Dibrugarh Town/Tinsukia.

2. 2423/2424 Guwahati Rajdhani will also be extended to Dibrugarh Town once a week.

3. 5659/5660 Howrah-Guwahati Kamrup Express will be extended to Dibrugarh Town.

4. An overnight service will be introduced between Guwahati and Tinsukia.

Attachment of AC-II Coaches with Howrah-Chennai Mail

360. SHRI RUP CHAND MURMU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to increase AC-2 coaches with Howrah-Chennai Mail;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that passengers are not getting more accommodation due to less number of quota allotted to and from Calcutta in the AC-2 class;

(d) if so, whether the Government are going to fulfill