

(d) if so, the details thereof, district-wise, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (d) Expansion of Telephone Exchanges as well as New Telephone Exchange are planned for each financial year. Detail for 1997-98 are not yet finalised.

#### Raising of Level of Platforms

943. SHRI SYDAIAH KOTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to raise the level of Platforms after gauge conversion from Guntur to Macherla and Gunture to Nandyal;

(b) if so, the number of platforms raised so far after conversion in that sector; and

(c) the target set up for raising the remaining platforms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir, except the ones which have already been raised after Gauge Conversion.

(b) Three platforms on Guntur-Macherla section and two platforms on Guntur-Nandyal section have been raised.

(c) Does not arise.

#### ESI Scheme for Cashew Workers

944. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the difficulties being faced by the Cashew workers in Kerala due to the stoppage of Employees State Insurance Scheme (ESI) for Cashew workers;

(b) whether the Government propose to take immediate steps to revoke such anti-labour decision and to ensure the benefits of the ESI scheme for the Cashew workers in Kerala; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) The Cashew workers working in Cashew factories covered under the ESI Act are entitled to ESI benefits as provided under the Scheme. However, a section of Cashew workers are not able to derive sickness benefit because of non-fulfilment of contributory conditions prescribed under the Scheme. The problem of such Cashew workers is under examination of the ESI Corporation. Meanwhile these workers continue to receive other benefits namely, medical benefit, disablement benefit, dependent benefit and maternity benefit under the ESI Scheme.

[Translation]

#### Mine Accidents

945. PROF. OMPAL SINGH NIDAR :  
SHRI DATTA MEGHE :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been considerable increase in Mine-accidents;

(b) if so, the number and details of Mine accidents reported during this year till date;

(c) the number of persons killed in these accidents;

(d) the amount of compensation given to the families of deceased;

(e) whether any scheme has been formulated for making the mining system more effective mobilising more resources for this sector and using better technology; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (f) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the house.

#### Revenue Earned by the Government

946. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the total revenue earned by the Government from the tourism sector;

(b) whether discriminatory attitude have been adopted by the Government in regard to development of the tourist places in Bihar; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) The tax revenue earned by the Central Government by way of expenditure tax from tourists during the current financial year upto January 1997 is Rs. 226.93 crores.

(b) No Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

#### Multinational Companies Willing to Invest in Communication

947. SHRI DATTA MEHGE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether some multinational companies are willing to invest in communication sector in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have shown interest in their investment proposals; and