

from the stations linked to the main reservation system at Delhi. Due to certain limitations in the telecommunication links, it has been possible at present to provide only limited connectivity at a few terminals linked with the Madras, Calcutta, Mumbai and Secunderabad Systems at Delhi.

(c) to (e) At present, one person is entitled to submit only one requisition except in a case where the same person is making reservation for going to and coming from the same destination, lying within the Northern Railway PRS System.

#### **Subsidy on Railways**

6308. SHRI K. PARASURAMAN: Will the minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have been providing subsidy for Railways in the country;

(b) the total amount of subsidy provided by the Government for Railways for providing transportation facilities in the four metropolitan cities for the last three years;

(c) whether the Government have any proposal to reduce or withdraw the subsidy; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The subsidy from General Revenues towards Dividend relief and other concessions for railways, during the last three years, has been as follows:

1994-95	Rs. 419.73 Crores
1995-96	Rs. 388.07 Crores
1996-97 (RE)	Rs. 465.71 Crores

However, there is no system of keeping of accounts of subsidy separately for any of the cities including metropolitan cities.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### **Filling up of GCS Posts**

6309. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the process of filling up of GCS posts by promotion of Section Officers in his Ministry is violative of Article 16 of Constitution violating the principle of equality of opportunity;

(b) the graduate Section Officers who have never been on deputation are available with 10-16 years service in the grade but the favourite ones jumping from one

deputation to another are selected to stage a comeback;

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that the condition of 'Cooling-off period' is not relaxed and those officers who are likely to stay for three years are selected instead of those who are waiting for cadre promotion earlier than that; and

(d) the manner in which those whose juniors as Section Officers got GCS promotion are proposed to be compensated?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) and (b) GCS posts in the Ministry of Communications are not filled by promotion of Section Officers; they are filled in accordance with the Recruitment Rules by notifying the vacancies among all categories of officers eligible to apply for the posts and basing the selection on merit.

(c) The 'cooling-off period' prescribed under the Rules is generally adhered to in making selection to GCS posts. As indicated above, GCS posts are not filled up from one group of officers only.

(d) As the GCS post cannot be filled up exclusively from the cadre of Section Officers, the question of granting compensation to the senior Section Officers, who have not been selected against GCS post, does not arise.

#### **Growth of Air Travel**

6310. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether air travel continue to grow @4.9% over the next 20 years;

(b) if so, whether Asia-Pacific will outpace all other areas in the world in traffic growth with annual and projected travel of 6.6%;

(c) whether a recent report submitted by the Sub-Committee to study the options for Air India have favoured the twin jet air bus 330 in preference to boeing 777 or Modonnel Doubles II or even Airbus 340;

(d) if so, whether the Committee also reported that Air India would not be able to fill more than 50% of the 30 additional seats being offered by Boeing 777 version;

(e) whether India's projection is that air traffic is likely to be 5.6% in the next 20 years; and

(f) if so, what are the steps taken to improve the air traffic growth during 1997-98 and whether all facilities have been made available to meet the rush of air traffic growth?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) According to the forecast prepared by the International Civil Aviation Organisation, the total

world airline scheduled passenger traffic in terms of passenger kilometres is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 5.5 percent over the period 1995 to 2005, as compared to 5 per cent annum over the period 1985-1995. The fastest growing regions projected are Transpacific and Europe Asia/Pacific.

(c) and (d) Air India have not so far taken a final decision regarding acquisition of Medium Capacity Long Range aircraft.

(e) and (f) The average annual growth rate of passenger traffic to/from India is expected to be around 7% during the Ninth Plan Period. To meet the growth, Air India is taking steps to augment its capacity.

#### **Renovation of Residence of CMD-TRAI**

6311. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an amount of Rs. 9 lakh was spent by MTNL on the renovation of the official residence of the former Chairman-cum-Managing Director on his appointment as member of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India;

(b) if so, the reasons for lavish spending on the renovation of his official residence;

(c) whether any limit for the renovation has been fixed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir. However an amount of approximately Rs. 9 lakhs has been spent during the last two years on the repairs and replacements in the official residence of CMD, MTNL.

(b) The expenditure has been incurred only on the essential repairs and the replacements in the official residence of the former CMD, MTNL which is located in a VIP area.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise in view of (c) above.

#### **Konkan Railway Project**

6312. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new technical problem has come up in the Konkan railway project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is likely to further delay the project; and

(d) if so, the latest position of the work and the likely date of commissioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Physical progress of the Konkan Railway Project at the end of April, 1997 is 98.5%. 464 kms out of 760 kms (364 kms between Roha and Sawantwadi on the North side and 100 kms between Mangalore and Kundapura on the South side) has already been opened for passenger traffic. A stretch of 185 kms between Kundapura and Canacona on the South side is completed in all respects and offered to Commissioner of Railway Safety's inspection and will be commissioned during May, 1997.

Commissioning of the balance portion of the line is expected to be by July, 1997.

#### **Citizen Band Radio Frequencies**

6313. SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the frequencies on the Citizen Band Radio available under the MPs Local Area Development Scheme;

(b) the manner in which it is likely to operate; and

(c) the manner this scheme can be implemented by the Members of Parliament in order to make wireless more popular and useful in schools, colleges and rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Forty frequency channels (Statement enclosed) have been earmarked for Citizen Band Radio applications, including the MPs Local Area Development Scheme.

(b) On receipt of application for grant of licence for Citizen Band Radio, appropriate frequencies are assigned out of channel frequencies earmarked for different purposes.

(c) Under the MPLAD scheme, implemented by the Department of Programme Implementation, the project titled "Citizen Band Radio", providing necessary details, has been formulated by the Department of Electronics, for promotion and popularisation of usage of Citizen band Radio in Schools, Colleges and rural areas.