

the operators of private airlines/companies?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SH. C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Some of the private airlines have defaulted in payment of Inland Air Travel Tax (I.A.T.T.) dues owed to the Government.

(b) Total outstanding dues pending recovery from private airlines as on 13.5.1997 is as under:

I.A.T.T. dues	-	1851.34 Lakhs
Interest	-	921.10 Lakhs
Penalty	-	1500.08 Lakhs

(c) and (d) Seven aircraft were detained in the past for recovery of I.A.T.T. dues. Out of these, five aircraft were released by the Customs Department after payment of the outstanding dues by the operators. One of the aircraft which was detained in November, 1996 was released on the basis of an interim order of the Delhi High Court, on deposit of security fixed by the Court. Action is taken as per law against the airlines defaulting in payment of I.A.T.T.

[*Translation*]

Expansion of Airport Near Abu Road

6323. SHRI PARASRAM MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme for expansion of airport near Abu Road is under consideration of the Government to connect Mount Abu, an important tourist place of Rajasthan, with air service;

(b) is so, the time by which the work is likely to start on this project; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) to (c) The airstrip near Abu Road belongs to the State Government of Rajasthan. Airports Authority of India has no plans to upgrade this airstrip.

[*English*]

Post Office Manned by Private People

6324. SHRI BHIMRAO VISHNUJI BADADE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether post-offices in rural areas are run by private people;

(b) if so, the number of post offices in the Kopergaon parliamentary constituency which are run by private people;

(c) the monthly amount of salary given to such people;

(d) whether there is any scheme to run such post offices on full-fledged basis; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No. Sir. No post office is run by private people. They are either manned by Departmental employees of Extra-departmental employees who are appointed by the Department.

(b) to (e) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Accounting Rates on Telecommunications

6325. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:

SHRI RAM SAGAR:

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY:

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO:

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has asked the Government to drastically reduce International accounting rates on telecommunication;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government in the matter;

(c) whether India's stand has been made clear before W.T.O.; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Federal Communication Commission has proposed certain bench marks of Settlement Rates to be complied within four to five years.

(b) The Govt. have responded to Federal Communication Commission's Notice of Proposed Rule Making as follows:

(i) Under the provision of ITU, the principles of accounting rates are decided in multilateral forum and the accounting rates are negotiated bilaterally within their frame work. FCC does not have jurisdiction to impose changes in International accounting rates unilaterally.

(ii) The high outgoing traffic from US is the result of marketing strategies adopted by US carriers.

(iii) The methodology of setting the Bench Marks does not take into account the ground realities prevailing in India and is inappropriate.

Since the cost of termination of calls is higher in developing countries as compared to developed countries,