

676. Gopalpur  
 677. Hari Deeh  
 678. Harirampur  
 679. Husenpur  
 680. Ibrahimpur TA Mandara  
 681. Immam Kullipur  
 682. Ismailpur Ta. Badalpur  
 683. Jadopur  
 684. Jugipur  
 685. Judapur Karnai  
 686. Jurapur Jingaha  
 687. Kaliyanpur  
 688. Kaliyanpur Kachhar  
 689. Kursund  
 690. Kutub Uddinpur  
 691. Lakhaneepur  
 692. Lakhanpur Kandu  
 693. Lakhanpur Karan  
 694. Nazarpur  
 695. Nekeilpur  
 696. Parathpur  
 697. Parasadpur  
 698. Puri Shobhai  
 699. Pure Udho  
 700. Raghapur Jangalpur  
 701. Raghauthpur Hardua  
 702. Ragnbanspur  
 703. Ruhi  
 704. Radapuri  
 705. Sahjeepur  
 706. Sakara Mau

#### **PDH Technology of Optical Fibre System**

6356. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VERMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the PDH technology of optical fibre system used for connecting exchanges which has become obsolete throughout the world was purchased by the MTNL are lying unused in their stores;

(b) whether excess payment have made to the supplier;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government propose to make any enquiry against the persons responsible therefor;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir. The OFC equipment was the latest state-of-the-technology equipment introduced in the local network by MTNL. PDH was the technology for the OFC equipment during the period in question and it was in line with policies of Department of Telecommunications.

PDH equipment procured by MTNL are not lying unused. The purchase of this equipment was based on the traffic requirements depending upon targets of providing new telephone connections, modernisations of inter-exchange junction network and to take care of requirements of various value-added service providers.

(b) and (c) Due to considerate difference in rates given in MTNL PO and the rates subsequently finalised by DOT, MTNL was placed in a situation where it was required to make recoveries from payment already released to suppliers and at no stage it could be visualised that there may be such a huge difference between the rates. The recovery amount comes to Rs. 3.29 crores.

MTNL is in the process of recovering the same; MTNL took legal advice from additional Solicitor General of India and ordered due recoveries. In the process, MTNL ordered invocation of bank guarantee given by the concerned supplies. However, some banks been challenged by the supplier in the Court. One of the supplier has sought for arbitration. Indian Council of Arbitration has already nominated three former Chief Justices of India as Arbitrators and arbitration proceedings have already commenced.

(d) to (f) Question does not arise in view of (b) and (c) above.

#### **Privatisation of Telecom Sector**

6357. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:

SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT:

SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated/ finalised a package of incentive and other policy decision to provide impetus to the process of privatisation of Telecom sector;

(b) if so, the details and implications thereof;

(c) the estimated private and foreign investment approved and actually taken place in the Telecom sector so far and expected during the current year and next three years;

(d) the details of steps taken/proposed to sort out contentious issues with the private operations; and

(e) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some of the major policy decisions taken to provide impetus to the process of privatisation of Telcom Sector are indicated below:-

(i) Telecom Service Projects (Basic and Cellular) have been included in the Infrastructure Sector, thus all fiscal benefits, viz., Tax Holiday, enhanced limit of external commercial borrowing, concessional project imports, etc. are available to private operators.

(ii) Amortisation of Licence Fee allowed for tax purposes.

(iii) In respect of Companies in the Infrastructure/ Services Sector where there is a prescribed cap of foreign exchange investment, only the direct investment is now considered for the prescribed cap and foreign investment in the investing company is not set off against this cap provided the foreign direct investment in the investing company does not exceed 49%.

(iv) A Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has been set up, to resolve all disputes between operators of various networks, including their interconnections.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) and (e) The licensee companies are free to meet or make representations to the concerned officers of DOT with a view to discuss and resolve any problems faced by them. The Government has also set up the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India and this Authority has already started functioning. A number of contentious issues such as assignability of licence, modification in force majeure condition, interconnect charge, payment of advance deposit to DOT etc. have been resolved.

As a result of the steps taken, 2 companies, viz., M/s. Bharti Telenet Ltd. and M/s. Reliance Telecom Pvt. Ltd. signed the licences for Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat Telecom Circles respectively for operating Basic Telephone Service.

#### **Over-Crowding in Hotels**

6358. SHRI SUBRAHMANYAM NELAVALA:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government issued instructions to the Hotels that over-crowding during the summer should be prohibited;

(b) if so, whether a number of efforts have been made to increase the hotel accommodation so that no foreign tourists are affected;

(c) if so, whether any action plan has been formulated for tourism promotion package which will be sent to the tourists during the off-season; and

(d) if so, the details of the concrete programmes of action plan to promote off-season tourism prepared by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Since summer is generally a lean period where the tourist traffic to all the destinations except the hilly areas is at its lowest. Efforts are however, being made to increase hotel accommodation.

(c) and (d) Marketing of special packages is done by the private trade. The Department of Tourism in its regular marketing programme also takes note of the lean summer season as off-season and tries to promote packages which is an ongoing process.

#### **Construction of New Building of Railway Stations**

6359. SHRI KACHARU BHARU RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to construct new building of the railway stations in Maharashtra during 1997-98; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Re-building/renovation of station buildings at Dadar, Ghatkopar, Thane, Mumbra, Dombivli, Kalyan, Akurdi, Chinchwad, Khadki, Lonavla, Shivajinagar, Nagpur, Andheri and Borivli have been taken up.

#### **Corruption in Purchasing of Various Commodities**

6360. SHRI B.K. GADHVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to organise exhibitions for various commodities for the use of Railways to bring transparency in the purchases undertaken by railways and to remove the scope of corruption; and

(b) if so, the details of centres proposed to be opened by the various zones of the railways for organising such exhibitions?

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

(b) The details of centres proposed to be opened on various zonal railways are as under: