

Waiting List for Telephone Connections

1459. SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of consumers are waiting for telephone connections in rural areas;

(b) if so, the number of such waitlisted consumers are in Karnataka Telecom circle; and

(c) the plans for giving connections to all the waiting consumers and the time by which the connections are likely to be given?

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

(b) and (c) The list for rural areas in Karnataka circle as on 30.6.97 is 87528. This is likely to be cleared by the end of current financial year i.e. 1997-98.

Demands for Post Office

1460. SHRI K. KANDASAMY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the urgent need to provide a post-office of Pappinaickenpatty in Puthichadhiran taluk in Namakkal district of Tamil Nadu; and

(b) if so, the time by when the post office is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b) A proposal for opening a post office at Pappinaickenpatty in Puthichadhiran taluk in Namakkal district to Tamil Nadu is under examination. If found justified on the Departmental norms, the post office will be sanctioned subject to availability of resources and Plan targets.

4th and 5th Unit of RTPS

1461. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the fourth and fifth Units of the Raichur Thermal Power Station (RTPS) Expansion Project, having generating capacity of 210 MW commissioned ahead of Schedule; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) The 4th unit of the Raichur Thermal Power Station (RTPS) (210 MW) was commissioned on 29.9.1994 as per schedule. The scheduled commissioning dates of the 5th and the 6th units of the Raichur Thermal Power Station Expansion

Project (2x210 MW) are 1.9.1999 and 1.3.2000 respectively. The work is progressing well and efforts are being made by the Karnataka Power Corporation (KPCL) to commission these expansion units ahead of the schedule.

[Translation]

Non-Commissioning of LPTs

1462. SHRI HANSRAJ AHIR : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether more than hundred Low Power Transmitters have not been commissioned despite of their being set up;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the LPT was set up in Aheri and Sironcha cities in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra but the staff was not appointed for the functioning and maintenance of those LPTs;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether staff is likely to be appointed in near future; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) to (f) All the Low Power Transmitters (LPTs) for which installation works were completed, have since been nationally commissioned into service, including those at Aheri and Sironcha located in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra, for which staff sanctions are not available by posting staff on tour from elsewhere in the network. While proposals for sanction of staff for the LPTs at Aheri and Sironcha have already been taken up for approval of the competent authority, no specific time-frame can be indicated in this regard.

[English]

Modernisation Programmes

1463. SHRI THOMAS HANSDA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "SAIL worried over its two steel plants" appearing in the Indian Express dated 8th July, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether any Expert Committee was formed to examine and report about the modernisation programme of Rourkela and Durgapur integrated Steel Plants;

(d) if so, the details of the Report;

(e) whether it is a fact that Rs. 10,000 crore have been spent on modernisation of these two steel plants and capacity utilisation of these plants has increased to the expected level;

(f) if not, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether any inquiry has been conducted by the Government in this regard; and

(h) if so, the action taken against the guilty persons?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) An amount of Rs. 4472.65 crores on modernisation of Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP) and Rs. 3453.84 crores on modernisation of Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) respectively have been spent by SAIL till 1996-97.

The modernisation programmes are in advance stages of completion in these steel plants and improvement in capacity utilisation to the envisaged level will be known on completion of the various units and their stabilisation. No Expert Committee has been formed to examine and report in this regard.

(f) to (h) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Bonus to Railway Employees

1464. SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Assistant and Stenographer 'C' were paid bonus for the year 1995-96;

(b) if so, whether the said amount of bonus is being recovered from these employees;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the said employees of the Railway Board have also paid the income tax on the amount of bonus received by them; and

(e) if so, the justification thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Assistants and Stenographers 'C' working in other Ministries were not paid ad-hoc bonus for the financial year 1995-96 on the ground that they are classified as Group-'B' non-gazetted. In fact a directive was received from the Ministry of Finance to recover the Productivity Linked Bonus amount paid to such staff of this Ministry.

(d) and (e) Since the entire Productivity Linked Bonus amount was not recovered from these employees

before March, 1997, the amount was taken into account for calculation of Income-tax.

[English]

Commercial Broadcasting System in AIR

1465. SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA :

DR. M. JAGANNATH :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Commercial Broadcasting Centre of All India Radio has since started working in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps proposed to be taken to appoint adequate staff for early start of the said centre?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Proposal regarding sanctioning of adequate staff for Commercial Broadcasting Centre of All India Radio, Visakapatnam is under active consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Increase in Prices of Steel Products

1466. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :

JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Steel majors set to raise HRC prices" appearing in the Business Standard dated July 1, 1997;

(b) if so, whether the big steel producers have been continuously increasing the prices of their products for past years; and

(c) if so, the names of the varieties of steel the prices of which have been increased during the last three years till March, 1997 and the percentage of increase effected and the grounds on which the said price rise was effected?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The details relating to SAIL in respect of some representative categories of steel are attached as Statement.