

service conditions;

(c) whether the Government proposed to stop such practice; and

(d) the reasons for not regularising their services?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) to (c) No, Sir. In Raipur district, letters are not distributed by women carrying letters in a basket. Throughout the district, delivery of mail is performed by Postmen only. However, in case of heavy mails, the Postmen may engage coolies (men/women) on daily wage basis for carrying parcels etc. on days when their quantum is more. Coolie charges are reimbursed according to the weight of the parcels on the basis of the rate fixed by the local Collector for unskilled labour.

(d) These workers are engaged by postman on need basis. They are neither hired by the Department, nor are they employees of the department. The question of their regularisation, therefore, does not arise.

[English]

MTNL Customer Harassment

5323. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned 'Customer harassment MTNL-style' appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 21.4.1997;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the action the Government propose to make the MTNL working transparent and responsive ?

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

(b) and (c) Since its formation, MTNL has been striving hard for rapid modernisation, accelerated growth of network, provisioning of new services and improvement in the services.

MTNL has given top priority to customer satisfaction. All out efforts are being made for provisioning of new telephone connections and shifting of existing ones within the stipulated norms. Some of the cases are delayed mainly due to non-availability of underground cable pairs. Delay in rectification however occurs in cases of cable break-downs and thefts. Monitoring of fault rectification process is done upto the highest level.

It is a fact that new edition of directory after 1994 has not been brought out due to contractual problems with the contractors. New edition of directory is expected to be issued shortly.

Constant efforts are being made to provide upto date local directory enquiry service '197' to the customers. This service has been decentralised for giving prompt and accurate information to the customers in many areas.

In the recent past the cable theft took place in different parts of Delhi disrupting the telephone services of a number of subscribers. To avoid the occurrences of such thefts in future, patrolling of vulnerable routes have been intensified and coordination at highest level with local police authorities has been undertaken and regular meetings are being conducted by GM (Transmission) with Addl. Commissioner of Police to curb the activities related to cable thefts.

Inspections of Local/STD PCOs sanctioned to private operators are done by field staff in MTNL, Delhi. In addition surprise checks are also made by Vigilance squad of MTNL, Delhi to check over-charging for the calls made by the public from such PCOs. During 1996, 13 PCOs were recommended for disconnection and 84 officials were punished for the mal-practices.

In a large complex network, there may be some complaints that have not received adequate attention to the satisfaction of the customers. However, we have different forums to attend to these individual cases and other grievances. There are 8 areas in MTNL, Delhi and in all areas as well as at HQ, Public Grievance Cells are functioning where single window concept for dealing with the public grievances is followed. All types of complaints received are registered, scrutinised and disposed of expeditiously. In order to enhance effectiveness of these cells, regular monitoring and progress of disposal of grievances even at senior level is being carried out. In addition there are also Customer Service Centres which act as a single window so that as far as possible visitors are attended to in these Centres and there is minimal need for them to go to individual officers.

Telephone Adalats are also held regularly at an interval of 3 months to provide on the spot redressal to long pending customers grievances. In 39 Adalats held up to April, 1997, 26700 cases have been finally settled.

Frequent customer open house sessions are held to obtain first hand problems of the customers regarding the telephone service and allied matters.

(d) The following steps have been taken by MTNL, Delhi to make its working transparent and responsive to the individual complaints of the subscribers:

Customer service centres (CSC) at area level and Divisional level have been opened in each area which provides single window working for the subscriber so that as far as possible customers problems are attended to in these CSCs and there is minimal need for the customer to visit individual office for their work.

Till date 40 exchange Fault Repair Service (FRSs) have been computerised which include 18 major exchanges.

To improve the services further, efforts are being made to introduce a Computerised Customer Service Management System (CSMS) in MTNL, Delhi during this year which will be a great help to achieve our goal of total customer satisfaction through on-line up-dating of the subscriber data such as bill payment details and monitoring of OBs.

Auto-manual services such as 198/2198 and 199 are being supplemented by computerised Interactive Voice Response Systems (IVRS) to reduce the human factor involved in customer services.

[*Translation*]

Daily Running of Express Train from Ayodhya to Delhi

5324. DR. RAMVILAS VEDANTI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposed to run an Express train daily from Ayodhya to Delhi;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) It is proposed to introduce a weekly express train between Delhi and Muzaffarpur via Faizabad, Ayodhya during 1997-98. However, introduction of a daily train from Ayodhya to Delhi is presently not feasible due to resource constraints and operational difficulties, including lack of terminal/maintenance facilities at Ayodhya.

[*English*]

Setting up of Sub Station of AIR, Orissa

5325. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government had sanctioned several years ago the setting up of four All India Radio sub-stations at Udala, Pancpir, Bishoi and Rairangpur in Orissa;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether none of four stations have been started;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (e) A scheme for setting up of Local Radio Station with 1 KW MW Transmitter, MP Studios and Staff quarters at Rairangpur was approved in December, 1994.

The work regarding setting up of All India Radio station at Rairangpur has already been started. Site for the station

has been identified. The telephone lines and power supply lines passing over the site are required to be shifted. The State Government authorities have been requested to divert the power supply lines and telephone lines passing through the site.

There is no approved scheme to set up a Radio Station at Udala, Pancpir and Bishoi in the State of Orissa.

[*Translation*]

Attachment of Unreserved Coaches with Long Distance Trains

5326. DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of unreserved coaches attached with the long distance trains during the past one year till March 1997, to make the rail travel comfortable for the ordinary rail passengers;
- (b) the steps taken during the past one year to provide pure drinking water, and catering facilities;
- (c) the total number of Diesel locomotives and passenger coaches demanded for the metre gauge rail service in the Ratlam Railway Division for the year 1996-97; and
- (d) the time by which these are likely to be supplied?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) Drinking water arrangements are provided at the stations and these arrangements are strengthened during the summer period. Arrangements are also made to provide satisfactory catering facilities enroute. Instructions have been issued to the railways for strengthening the drinking water arrangement at all important stations. Steps taken include provision of water trollies, engaging of hot weather watermen, taking assistance of voluntary organisations, availability of drinking water in trains through pantry car etc.

(c) and (d) Railways have not manufactured and supplied any M.G. Diesel loco/coaches to Zonal Railways during last 3 years. However, due to gauge conversion, M.G. locos and coaches have been transferred from one Railway to another Railway depending upon the availability of such surplus stock on account of gauge conversion.

[*English*]

Accumulation of Dirty Water at Platform

5327. DR. ARVIND SHARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there is a large