

In view of the great concern being shown for the need to up grade proficiency in the English language, several measures have been envisaged. These include programmes which will strengthen existing institutions in English and language teaching and adoption of some new programmes. Among others, these include :

(1) Financial assistance to State Governments for setting up of District English language centres which are expected to function as Resource Centres and would be responsible for the preparation of materials and training of teachers in the District.

(2) Financial assistance to Regional Institutes of English, English language Teaching Institutes and other institutions engaged in English Language teaching with a view to strengthening their programmes for training of resource persons and teachers in English.

(3) Strengthening of programmes by the UGC for effecting improvements in the teaching of English in universities and colleges, such as, setting up of English language teaching centres, conducting remedial courses, organisation of summer institutes, holding of seminars, etc.

(4) Intensifying programmes of NCERT for the benefit of schools, teachers and students.

(5) Utilisation of technologies of communication, particularly radio and television, for more effective teaching and learning of the English language.

(6) Enhanced collaboration with the British Council in various forms such as training awards, placement of British specialists, assistance in production and distribution of software material, etc.

[*Translation*]

**Delay in Sending Electric Bills in Delhi**

+1353. SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether is a fact that the people who are provided new electricity connections in Delhi, get their electricity bills after a period of one year or more ;

(b) if so, whether it does not cause loss to Government revenue and inconvenience to the people ;

(c) if so, whether Government are making any arrangements to send these bills in time ;

(d) if so, the time by which Government propose to send these bills to those persons who have not received these bills so far ; and

(e) the number of new electric connections provided during the last two years and the number of cases in which bills have been sent and of those in which bills are yet to be sent ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND):(a) No, Sir. Normally it takes 3 to 4 months for DESU to send the first electricity consumption charges bill in respect of a new connection.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

(e) Out of a total of 1,26,283 new connections given in the last two years, bills have been sent in 1,03,555 cases and bills are being sent in the remaining 22,728 cases.

**Delay in Sending Bills by D.E.S.U.**

+1354. SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the electricity consumers in Delhi have to resort to instalment payments against the electricity bills sent to them after these get accumulated for one or two years ;

(b) if so, the total number of applications received in this regard during the last two years and the number out of them in respect of which permission has been granted for making payments in instalments ; and

(c) the number of consumers whose electricity connections were disconnected even on making payment against such bills ?

**THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) :** (a) to (c) Normally DESU sends electricity bills to consumers in accordance with a regular billing programme. In certain cases, such as those involving replacement of meters and levy of higher tariff of misuse of supply or use of excess load, bills for a longer period have to be raised. In cases where accumulated/revised bills have to be sent, the benefit of payment in instalments is allowed on consumers' request. During the period from 1.3.83 to 28.2.85 the facility of payment in instalments was allowed by DESU in 7681 cases. According to the Undertaking, electric supply is disconnected only when instalments are not paid on the due dates.

[*English*]

**Extension of B.G. Line upto Lanka in Naogaon District, Assam**

**1355. SHRI ANANDA PATHAK :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal for the extension of the broad-gauge line upto Lanka in Naogaon District in Assam ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

**THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANSI LAL) :** (a) to (c) Surveys are being carried out for conversion of the existing Gauhati-Dibrugarh metre gauge line via Tinsukia into broad gauge, which covers the Gauhati-Lanka section, and for an alternative broad gauge alignment between Guahati and Dibrugarh connecting important towns of Assam. A decision about extension of the broad gauge line beyond Gauhati will be taken after the survey reports have been received and scrutinised, in consultation with the Planning Commission, subject to availability of resources.

**Fifth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education**

**1356. SHRI CHITTA MAHATA :** Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Fifth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education was held recently in Bangkok for the development of education in Asia and the Pacific ; and

(b) if so, the outcome of the Conference and reaction of the Government thereto ?

**THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION (SHRI K.C. PANT) :** (a) Yes, Sir. The Fifth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and those responsible for economic planning in the Member-States of Asia and the Pacific was convened by Unesco at Bangkok from 4th to 11th March, 1985.

(b) The conference was attended by 125 delegates from 27 Member-States of Unesco in the region. Besides reviewing educational developments in Asia and the Pacific since the Fourth Conference held in Colombo in 1978, the major issues discussed at the Conference were : the universalisation and renewal of primary education and intensification of the struggle against illiteracy ; the renewal of educational content and methods ; improvement and development of science teaching ; promotion of education for international understanding ; higher education and development, namely, the basic problems of higher education in the region, training, research and development and the role of higher education in the improvement of the education system. Besides, the Conference also considered programmes relating to educational planning and administration, educational reform, research and experimentation, educational innovation and information and the training of educational personnel. The Conference also considered new trends, dimensions and priorities in regional and international cooperation for development of education.

The Conference, *inter alia* adopted a Declaration reaffirming the commit-