

(c) There are proposals to connect Kottayam with Madurai partly on microwave medium in the section Kottayam to Kumily covering Peermade and partly on optical fibre cable in the section Kumily to Madurai during the 8th Plan period. However, there are also two proposals in this region for providing (a) between Kottayam and Erattupetta covering Ettumanoor, and Pala and (b) between Peermade and Kumily during 8th Five Year Plan. Erumely is, however, not included in the schemes.

Deportation of Illegal Immigrants

914. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken up with Bangladesh the issue of deportation of millions of illegal Bengladeshi immigrants in India and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the progress made on the issue?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b). We have taken up the question of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh in India with the Government of Bangladesh on several occasions in the past. We have conveyed our concern, to the Government of Bangladesh over the seriousness and magnitude of the problems created in some states of India. We have also emphasised the need for their cooperation and a meaningful dialogue to resolve this issue. During the visit of Shri R.L. Bhatia, Minister of State for External Affairs, to Dhaka in December 1992, it was agreed that official-level discussions on the subject would take place in Dhaka.

[Translation]

Vayudoot Service from Ratnagiri Airport

915. DR. GUNAWANT RAMBAU SARODE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION & TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Vayudoot service has been withdrawn from Ratnagiri with effect from July 1991;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is any proposal to reintroduce the service from Ratnagiri; and

(d) if so, the time by which this service is likely to be reintroduced?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (d). Vayudoot operations to Ratnagiri were discontinued in September, 1989 due to operational constraints. Vayudoot has no immediate plans to restore operations to Ratnagiri.

Joint Women Mountaineer party

916. SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether a joint Woman Mountaineer party of India and Nepal is likely to scale Mount Everest in March, 1993;

(b) if so, the details of the participants; and

(c) whether any women from Bihar is participating in it?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (b). Yes, Sir. The India-Nepalese women's Everest Expedition team 1993 consists of 17 Indian members and 7 Nepalese members.

(c) No Sir.

[English]

Visit of Prime Minister of Spain

917. SHRIMATI BIBHU KUMARI DEVI: SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK:

SHRI KESRI LAL:
SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:
SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister of Spain visited India recently;

(b) if so, the purpose of the visit; and

(c) the subjects discussed during the visit and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The purpose of the visit was to reciprocate the visit of former PM Shri Rajiv Gandhi to Spain in 1988 and PM's transit visit to Spain in June 1992.

(c) Subjects discussed during the visit included all aspects of bilateral relations and regional and international issues of mutual interest such as the European Community, South Asia and economic reforms. It was agreed to strengthen bilateral trade and investment, and meetings were held between Indian business circles and the visiting delegation. Prospects of cooperation in the fields of tourism and science and technology were discussed, and Agreements were signed on avoidance of double taxation, cultural exchange and cooperation in combating terrorism, drug-trafficking and organised crime.

Operation of Private Airlines

918. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH:
SHRI RUPCHAND PAL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of flights of private airlines operating before the strike of the pilots route-wise; and

(b) the details of increase in their num-

ber during the strike, route-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b). Prior to the strike by pilots of Indian Airlines, during November, 1992, 760 flights were operated by air taxi operators, carrying 52,013 passengers. During the strike period (from 10.12.92 to 24.1.93), 1879 such flights were operated carrying 1,63,541 passengers, Route-wise details are being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Funds to T.V. Serials Producers

919. SHRI VILASRAO NAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the funds provided by the Government to the producers to make serials during the last three years;

(b) whether all those serials have been telecast for which funds have been provided by the Government;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the loss suffered by the Government as a result thereof; and

(e) the action being taken by the Government in this regard.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO): (a) An amount of Rs.21.71 crores was sanctioned by Doordarshan to outside producers during the last three years for the production of commissioned programmes including serials.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Some have already been telecast, the telecast of others would depend upon Doordarshan's overall programme requirements from time to time.