

Recognition of Union Labour Centres

5910. SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state whether in the changed political scenario, the trade union labour centres of regional political parties will be recognised and included as members of Standing Labour Committee etc., in order to represent the regional aspirations of the working class?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : The criteria for a trade union to be recognised as Central Trade union at present is that the trade union should have a verified membership of 5 lakhs or more and spread over at least four states and four industries. In the case of regional trade unions, if they fulfill the above criteria they could become Central Trade Union Organisations.

Increase and Decrease in Area after Independence

5911. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state area of the country at present and the year-wise details of the increase or decrease in it after independence till date?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Cheating with Tourists by Touts

5912. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to a news-item captioned "Terrified tourist taken for a ride by touts" appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated February 24, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the action taken by Delhi Police against the culprits; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Union Government to ensure that the tourists arriving at airports and railway stations are not cheated by unscrupulous touts, taxi drivers and travel agents, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ms. Monica Traczic had lodged a complaint with Delhi Police that she had on her arrival hired a taxi from Airport of Connaught Place but the taxi driver took her to the office of a travel agent near Gole Market, New Delhi from where she was sent to some place in Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi where she

was confined for four days and money extracted from her.

(c) On the basis of the investigations conducted by Delhi Police, four persons allegedly involved in the case were arrested and charge-sheeted in the Court. One more person suspected to be involved is absconding and has not so far been arrested but Delhi Police have obtained non-bailable warrant against him from the Court.

(d) The measures taken to eliminate the touting menace include deployment of police personnel at vulnerable points especially during peak hours, constant vigil at the pre-paid taxi booths; and rigorous and checking of the taxis carrying the passengers to their destination. In addition, Delhi Police arrested 943 "touts" and impounded 428 vehicles during the current year upto the 15th July, 1998.

Suicidal Death

5913. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the progress made till now regarding the investigations of the circumstances leading to the so-called suicidal death of Joint Secretary of Mines, Late M.C. Mohapatra on September 27, 1997 by jumping from Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi;

(b) the time by which the investigation is likely to be completed;

(c) whether any charge sheet has been filed by CBI in this case; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) As per the information received from the CBI, they have so far examined 58 witnesses connected with the case and also got constituted a Board of Doctors to examine the postmortem report in detail. Besides, the material collected from the scene of occurrence has been sent to the Central Forensic Science Laboratory for opinion which has been partly received.

(b) It is difficult to lay a specific time-frame for completion of the investigation as it depends on several factors.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Policy of Protect Consumers

5914. DR. PRABHA THAKUR : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by the Government to protect