

broadcasting which interalia would address the issue of entry of foreign holding in the broadcasting companies.

As far as print media is concerned, the entry of foreign print media in the country is regulated by a Cabinet Resolution of 1955 which prohibits :-

- (i) Publication of foreign owned newspapers and periodicals in the country;
- (ii) Publication of Indian editions of foreign newspapers/periodicals dealing mainly with news and current affairs;

The Government continues to be guided by this policy which has neither been changed nor rescinded.

(b) and (c). This Ministry has not permitted any private TV operator to uplink signals from Indian soil to foreign satellite.

(d) This Ministry is not aware of any such uplinking.

(e) to (g). Meeting held in September, 1996 was a part of the process of consultation being held with various political parties on the issues relating to Prasar Bharati and Broadcasting Law. A questionnaire was also sent to leaders of various political parties and only a few of them have responded so far. After taking these views into consideration, a Broadcasting Bill will soon be introduced in the Parliament.

[Translation]

Computer Reservation Services

2979. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Barauni has not so far been linked with Calcutta regarding computer reservation services; and

(b) if so, the time by which computer reservation services at Barauni are likely to be linked with the entire country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Barauni is connected with the main computer system of Delhi. There is no proposal at present to link it with any other system.

[English]

Zinc Trade Agreement

2980. SHRI JAGATVIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Hindustan Zinc Limited have any trade agreements with France and two Australian Companies for mining; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) As part of Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL)'s longterm strategy

to diversify into different fields of business, three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) have been signed with leading foreign Parties, viz., BHP Minerals, Australia, Nuigini Mining Limited (NML), Australia, and BRGM, France/VMC, Vietnam, for the exploration and if found viable, exploitation of base and precious metals in India and abroad.

(b) The MoU with BHP Minerals is for grass-root exploration for Lead, Zinc, Copper and Gold and associated minerals in Rajasthan.

The MoU with NML is for exploration and if found viable, exploitation of identified gold prospects in India.

The MoU with BRGM (France) and VMC, now restructured as Vietnam Gem and Gold Corporation (VIGEGO), is for exploration and, if found viable, exploitation of Pac Lang Gold prospects in Vietnam.

[Translation]

Employment on Compassionate Ground

2981. DR. G.R. SARODE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the employment on compassionate ground is provided in Railways;

(b) if so, the number of details of such employment provided in Bhusaval Division under Central Railway during the last three years;

(c) the number of such cases pending in Bhusaval Division; and

(d) the time by which these cases are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(d) The extant instructions require the Zonal Railways to make all out efforts to provide compassionate appointments to all eligible persons as early as possible within the guidelines laid down for the purpose. It is, however, difficult to fix any time limit for the appointments on compassionate grounds, as the same depends on several factors like availability of suitable vacancies, wards attaining majority etc.

[English]

Telephone Connections

2982. SHRI PRAKASH VISHWANATH PARANJPE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) list of telecom districts having more than 10,000 telephone connections with waiting list;

(b) the staff strength in each district on permanent and temporary basis;

(c) whether Kalyan Telecom district have less staff as compared to other Telecom district in the country; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA) : (a) to (d). The information is being collected from the field units and will be furnished in due course.

Stoppage of 'News Tonight' on Primary Channel of Doordarshan

2983. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ :
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :

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

(a) whether News Bulletin 'News Tonight' has been stopped telecasting from primary channel of Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and

(c) the steps taken to restart the same?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Doordarshan decided to discontinue the telecast of the 'News Tonight' programme following the agreement entered into by the producers of the programme for the production of news programmes in Hindi and English for telecast on the foreign channel, 'Star Plus'.

(c) There is no proposal to restart the same at present.

[Translation]

Construction of Air-Strip in Pithoragarh

2984. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering any scheme regarding construction of air-strip in district Pithoragarh of U.P.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for slow progress in the construction of Air-strip; and

(d) the time by which the construction work of this air-strip is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (d). No, Sir. However, the State Government of Uttar Pradesh has constructed an air-

strip of dimensions 6000' x 150' suitable for 50 seater aircraft at Pithoragarh.

[English]

Non-Availability of Waiting List Tickets

2985. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that there was no waiting list ticket available in all the trains of New Delhi to Patna, Dhanbad, Howrah etc. during November 4, 1996 to November 15 1996 and onwards;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government to increase train or providing special train to the passengers as per requirement;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the special train was arranged only on November 8, 15, and 18, 1996 and

(d) the number of touts (reservation broker) were caught and punished by the railways during October, 1996 to November 1996?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Wait-listed tickets were not available by some trains viz. 2382 Poorva Express, 2312 Kalka Mail, 2392 Magadh Express, 2554 Vaishali Express, 2802 Purshotam Express and 5622 North-East Express on some days and in some classes.

(b) and (c). 5 Special trains from New Delhi to Patna on 8th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 18th November, 1996 were arranged. In addition, Poorva Express, Kalka Mail, Rajdhani Express and Shramjeevi Express were also augmented by one coach during this period.

(d) 20 touts were apprehended and prosecuted over Northern Railway during October and November, 1996.

Divisional Railway Office

2986. SHRI SURESH R. JADHAV : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to alter the decision taken earlier to establish Divisional Railway office at Nanded under South Eastern Railway where mobilization of resources in this connection is remote;

(b) whether the decision is being taken to establish Divisional office at Purna Junction where resources required are available at hand;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Government has decided to set up a Divisional Office at Nanded.