

world airline scheduled passenger traffic in terms of passenger kilometres is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 5.5 percent over the period 1995 to 2005, as compared to 5 per cent annum over the period 1985-1995. The fastest growing regions projected are Transpacific and Europe Asia/Pacific.

(c) and (d) Air India have not so far taken a final decision regarding acquisition of Medium Capacity Long Range aircraft.

(e) and (f) The average annual growth rate of passenger traffic to/from India is expected to be around 7% during the Ninth Plan Period. To meet the growth, Air India is taking steps to augment its capacity.

Renovation of Residence of CMD-TRAI

6311. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an amount of Rs. 9 lakh was spent by MTNL on the renovation of the official residence of the former Chairman-cum-Managing Director on his appointment as member of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India;

(b) if so, the reasons for lavish spending on the renovation of his official residence;

(c) whether any limit for the renovation has been fixed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir. However an amount of approximately Rs. 9 lakhs has been spent during the last two years on the repairs and replacements in the official residence of CMD, MTNL.

(b) The expenditure has been incurred only on the essential repairs and the replacements in the official residence of the former CMD, MTNL which is located in a VIP area.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise in view of (c) above.

Konkan Railway Project

6312. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new technical problem has come up in the Konkan railway project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is likely to further delay the project; and

(d) if so, the latest position of the work and the likely date of commissioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Physical progress of the Konkan Railway Project at the end of April, 1997 is 98.5%. 464 kms out of 760 kms (364 kms between Roha and Sawantwadi on the North side and 100 kms between Mangalore and Kundapura on the South side) has already been opened for passenger traffic. A stretch of 185 kms between Kundapura and Canacona on the South side is completed in all respects and offered to Commissioner of Railway Safety's inspection and will be commissioned during May, 1997.

Commissioning of the balance portion of the line is expected to be by July, 1997.

Citizen Band Radio Frequencies

6313. SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the frequencies on the Citizen Band Radio available under the MPs Local Area Development Scheme;

(b) the manner in which it is likely to operate; and

(c) the manner this scheme can be implemented by the Members of Parliament in order to make wireless more popular and useful in schools, colleges and rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Forty frequency channels (Statement enclosed) have been earmarked for Citizen Band Radio applications, including the MPs Local Area Development Scheme.

(b) On receipt of application for grant of licence for Citizen Band Radio, appropriate frequencies are assigned out of channel frequencies earmarked for different purposes.

(c) Under the MPLAD scheme, implemented by the Department of Programme Implementation, the project titled "Citizen Band Radio", providing necessary details, has been formulated by the Department of Electronics, for promotion and popularisation of usage of Citizen band Radio in Schools, Colleges and rural areas.