

[English]

Loss to Ship—Owners Due to Holding up of Ships at Ports

6690. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether cargo ships are being held up at the ports due to shortage of certificated officers consequently increasing shipowners' operating costs; and

(b) if so, the quantum of losses being incurred by them on this account?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) and (b). The Indian National Shipowners Association has estimated the total number of ship days lost by Indian shipowners for want of certificated officers to be around 335 during the period from July 1989 to January 1990. The average loss per ship day on account of standing charges has been estimated by Indian National Shipowners Association at around Rs. 1 lakh.

Entrusting of Work of Village Panchayat to Taluka Panchayat Under JRY

6691. SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a flexibility is given to the State Governments or to DRDA to entrust the work of the Village Panchayats to the Taluka Panchayats if the Village Panchayat is not in a position to take up the work under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI UPENDRA

NATH VERMA): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Where the Village Panchayat/Panchayats are not in existence, their (Village Panchayat/Panchayats) share of funds will be passed on to the concerned Block/Block Samiti who will be responsible for implementing the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana in those Panchayat/Panchayats.

[Translation]

Haj Nivas

6692. SHRI ASHOK ANANDRAO DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'Haj Nivas' have been constructed in Delhi and Bombay for Haj pilgrims; and

(b) if so, the share of Union Government in the construction of these Haj Nivas?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) and (b). The construction work of "Bait-ul-Hujaj" or: Haj House" in Bombay is nearing completion. The Central Government did not provide any financial assistance in its construction. Information on the part of the question relating to "Haj Nivas" in Delhi is being collected.

[English]

Exemption of Telephone Services from the Ambit of Consumers' Protection Act, 1986

6693. SHRI K.S. RAO:
SHRI P.C. THOMAS:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications has any proposal to seek exemption of telephone services from the

ambit of the Consumers' Protection Act, 1986;

(b) if so, the reasons that weighed in favour of seeking such exemption;

(c) whether this would not be regarded as anti-consumer measures; and

(d) if not, the forum that will be available to the telephone subscribers for redressal of their grievances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The reasons for seeking such an exemption are as follows:

(i) Elaborate grievances redressal machineries already exist within the Department of Telecommunications, some of which are given in the answer to part (d) of this question.

(ii) Certain anomalies exist between the Consumer Protection Act and the Indian Telegraph Act.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) For redressal of the grievances, the subscribers, have a number of grievance redressal machineries at several levels. Some of the forums where a subscriber can make his complaint and get the redressal of his grievances are given below:

(i) In case of services complaints, the subscriber can dial '198' or any of the officials/officers of the Department, normally listed

in a telephone directory;

(ii) Public grievances cells in large offices;

(iii) over 400 Customer Service Centres throughout the country;

(iv) Telephone Adalats and Open House Sessions;

(v) Officers of the Department meet the public normally on all working days;

(vi) Telecom Advisory Committee, which have representation from various public forums;

(vii) provision exists for arbitration in disputes between the subscriber and the Department under Section 7(b) of the Indian Telegraph Act.

Expansion of Telephone Exchanges in Kottayam District In Kerala

6694. SHRIRAMESH CHENNITHALA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to expand Ramapuram, Erattupetta Mundakayam, exchanges in Kottayam Telephone district, Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details are as follows: