

AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF SPACE (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : (a) The French Government has dropped the development of their Diamant B. C. Satellite Launcher.

(b) The decision of the French Government does not affect the Indian space programme.

News-Item 'Is Mai Lai in Maharashtra' Appearing in Blitz Dated 24th June, 1972

*58. SHRI C. JANARDHANAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to an article appearing in the Blitz (last page) dated the 24th June, 1972 captioned "Is Mai Lai in Maharashtra"; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) It has been the policy of the Government that the administration should be solicitous of the welfare of the weaker sections of the society, particularly whenever any unfortunate incident takes place in which members of such weaker sections are the victims. All authorities concerned have been directed to ensure prompt and effective investigation of offences committed against Harijans and it has been clarified that any failure to do so would amount to a great dereliction of duty on the part of the officers concerned.

Loss on Post Offices in Rural Areas

*59. SHRI JAGANNATH MISHRA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Posts and Telegraphs Department loses Rs. 90 lakhs every year for putting up Post offices in rural areas ; and

(b) if so, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA) : (a) The Posts and Telegraphs Department is incurring a loss of about Rs. 67 lakhs per annum on an average for opening and retaining experimental Post Offices.

(b) After Independence, in accordance with the objective of providing the very basic and preliminary infrastructure of communication to the rural folk, the Government have been following a liberal policy in the matter of starting rural postal service.

The loss mentioned in (a) above are the direct result of this policy.

बिहार में गरीबी

*60. श्री एम० एस० पुरती : क्या योजना मन्त्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या बिहार के मुख्य मन्त्री ने यह स्वीकार किया है कि बिहार राज्य के 50 लाख लोग दरिद्रता स्तर से भी नीचे का जीवन व्यतीत कर रहे हैं ;

(ख) यदि हाँ, तो क्या केन्द्र सरकार ने इस सम्बन्ध में बिहार सरकार से कुछ विशेष योजनाओं की सिफारिश की है ; और

(ग) क्या इसके लिए धन राशि भी स्वीकृत की गई है, और यदि हाँ, तो कितनी राशि दी गई है ?

योजना मन्त्रालय में राज्य मन्त्री (श्री मोहन धारिया) : (क) राज्य सरकार से प्राप्त सूचना के अनुसार, बिहार के मुख्य मन्त्री ने इस प्रकार का कोई वक्तव्य नहीं दिया है ।

(ख) और (ग). बिहार राज्य ने गरीबी के उन्मूलन के लिए जो विशेष उपाय अपनाए हैं, उन्हें दृष्टि हुए एक विवरण सभा पटल पर प्रस्तुत है । [मन्त्रालय में रखा गया । देखिये सख्या LT-3222/72]

Sale and Smuggling of Liquor in the Country

401. SHRI MUHAMMED SHERIEF : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any measures have been taken by Government to check the sale of spurious liquor and smuggling in the country ; and

(b) if so, the State-wise steps taken in the matter and the progress achieved ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE