

[1 August, 2002]

RAJYA SABHA

2. The service tax is chargeable @ 5% of the total call value for calls made from STD VPT and on total bill amount in case of normal telephone.

*3. The slab wise monthly rental for normal WLL (Fixed) telephone in rural is as below:

Exchange System	Amount
Less than 1000 Lines	Rs. 50
1000-below 30,000 lines	Rs. 110
30,000-below 1 lakh	Rs. 150
1 lakh and above	Rs. 210

Revival of Retrenchment proposal

*277. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Government revives retrenchment proposal, to amend IDA' published in the 'Business Standard' dated the 8th July, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the proposed amendment to Industrial Disputes Act is likely to be put in place?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) to (c) Attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item which was published in the Business Standard dated 06.07.2002. The news-item, in brief, states that the Cabinet had earlier approved in principle allowing units employing less than 1000 workers to rationalise their workforce without having to take prior permission from the appropriate Government and that the Ministry had decided to exempt units employing less than 300 workers from the requirement of getting permission from the Government for rationalising the workforce. The news-item also refers to the Report of the Second National Commission on Labour.

Amendments to various labour laws are proposed keeping in view the requirement of the social partners and after a process of consultation. The Government has received the Report of the Second National Commission on Labour. This Report will serve as an useful input for formulation of policies and legislations on labour matters. No fixed timeframe can be given for putting in place the amendments to the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

Agreements Signed by Indian Delegation with Singapore

*278. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN:

SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) The agreements signed by the Indian delegation with the Government of Singapore during the Prime Minister's recent visit to Singapore;

(b) Whether it is a fact that some major industrialists have shown disinterest with regard to investments in India, in view of the recent communal clashes in a part of the country; and

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) During the Prime Minister's visit to Singapore from 7-9, April, 2002, the two countries signed two Memoranda of Understanding for (i) co-operation in the field of telecommunications and (ii) culture & heritage.

(b) No, Sir. No specific cases from Singapore have come to Government's notice.

(c) Does not arise.

National Highways in Andhra Pradesh

*279. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared any action plan for replacement of level crossings by road overbridges on the National Highways in Andhra Pradesh;