

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These Members have been retired under Sub-section (3), read with Sub-section (5) of Section 6 of Prasar Bharati Act, 1990.

Economic Possibilities of Film Industry

†1170. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which the economic possibilities have increased after giving the status of industry to film industry;

(b) whether people related to this industry have submitted their demands to Government and if so, the nature of these demands?

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) After the status of Industry Sector was accorded to the film industry, in the Budget for 1999-2000, the benefits of a new Section 80 HHF of the Income Tax Act has been made applicable to companies engaged in the export of entertainment software.

(b) and (c) The Ministry has taken up the following proposals received from the film industry with the Ministry of Finance in order to enable the entertainment sector to avail of the benefits available to the Information Technology (LT.) Sector thus making it possible to tap its full potential as a foreign exchange earner and to generate employment opportunities:

(i) rates of customs duty on professional equipment for films, television and music industry may be similar to the duty structure laid down for LT. Sector;

(ii) customs duty and countervailing duty on colour raw stock be waived as it is not manufactured in India;

(iii) exemption from payment of excise duty on pre-recorded video cassettes may be given with retrospective effect;

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(iv) excise duty on compact discs be waived as in the case of prerecorded cassettes in order to deprive manufacturers of pirated CDs of an unfair price advantage;

(v) extending the benefits of Section 80-IA of the Income Tax Act, 1961 to cinema halls and multiplexes set up within the country;

(vi) benefits of new Section 80HHF, announced in the Budget for 1999-2000, to be made applicable to proprietors, individuals etc. engaged in the export of entertainment software as well and with retrospective effect from 01.4.89.

Price hike of Employment News

†1171. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that price of weekly publications Employment News and Rozgar Samachar has been increased from Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 with effect from 6th February, 1999;

(b) Whether it is also a fact that the said weekly is mainly read by the unemployed persons; and

(c) If so, the justification of the said price hike?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes.

(b) It is also read by the unemployed youth.

(c) The price has been hiked to offset production cost.

Closure of song and drama division at Manipur

1172. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Song and Drama Division at Manipur is going to be closed;

(b) by when the vacant post of Assistant Director in the Division will be filled up; and

(c) the reasons for keeping the post vacant for so long?

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