

M/s. Bharat Cooperative Ltd. New-Delhi in their letter dated 24-8-78 asked for a 'sizeable quantity of G. C. Sheets'. As it was not supported by any recommendation of the sponsoring authority, the matter was referred to Delhi Administration and M/s. Bharat Cooperative Ltd. were informed of this by SAIL in their letter dated 13-9-78. However, Delhi Administration informed SAIL that G. C. sheets were rarely used for construction of houses in Delhi City or rural areas.

Cost of living index

*198. SHRI S. W. DHABE: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what are the major recommendations of the committee presided over by Prof. Rath regarding the revision of the cost of living index and other connected matters; and

(b) by when Government propose to implement the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) and (b) The Committee's Report has been laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 31 August 1978. The major recommendations of the Committee relate to Family Living Surveys, Pricing of rationed and non-rationed items, House Rent Index, Introduction of the 1971 Base Series, Linking Factor, Price Collection Procedure and Machinery and desirability of associating user interests with the process of price collection work.

The report is under examination in consultation with the Governments of the States and Union Territories.

Documentary film on Acharya Rajneesh Ashram

•199. SHRI KALP NATH RAI,
SHRI SITARAM KESRI;
SHRI DHARAMCHAND
JAIN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a press report which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 7th October, 1978 to the effect that a German TV network has completed a documentary film on the activities of the Acharya Rajneesh Ashram despite the ban imposed by Government on its filming; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On enquiry, however, it was found that the German TV network's Indian cameraman had gone to the Ashram to do a spot coverage for a news story. This appeared in a news background programme for 7 minutes, and it was not a documentary film as reported. It does not accordingly violate any Government order, since there is no bar on spot coverage for news purposes.

•200. [Transferred to the 14th December, 1978.]

Under-Staffing in the Telephone Exchanges in Andhra Pradesh

729. SHRI GHOUSE MOHIUDDIN SHEIKH; Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of telephone exchanges in Andhra Pradesh are not adequately staffed: and

(b) if so, what arrangements have been made by Government to ensure prompt service to subscribers specially during the periodical, seasonal and unavoidable absenteeism among the existing staff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEO SAI); (a) and (b) There-quired information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of Rajya Sabha.

Expeditious Settlement of Outstanding Provident Fund Dues

730. SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Provident Fund Commissioner has no jurisdiction over the autonomous bodies like the Indian Institute of Public Administration, to check the delay in the payment of provident fund dues and gratuity to their employees;

(b) whether Gnoverment are aware that the Indian Institute of Public Administration has not paid provident fund dues to a deceased professor's family for the last eight years; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative what action Government propose to take to protect the interests of the employees of such autonomous bodies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. RAM KRIPAL SINHA): (a) Yes. The Indian Institute of Public Administration is not covered by the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.

(b) The Institute has reported that it has its own contributory provident

fund scheme for the benefit of its employees and that the claim of Smt. Uma Narula for the payment of provident fund dues of late Dr. B. S. Narula could not be settled by them for want of a succession certificate from the competent Court of law.

(c) Does not arise.

U.S. Military Base in Micronesia

731. SHRI N. P. CHENGALRAYA NAIDU. Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news report which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 30th September, 1978 to the effect that U.S.A. intends to establish a number of military bases on the islands in the trust territory of Micronesia to bring Asian countries within their striking range; and

(b) if so, what action Government of India propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU); (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government are not aware of any evidence to indicate that the US Government intends to establish a number of military bases in the trust territory of Micronesia in the Pacific Ocean where U.S.A. already has military facilities. According to the information conveyed by the Permanent Representative of U.S.A. to U.N. in April, 1978, negotiations are in progress between the U.S. Government and the representatives of Micronesia and other islands in the area for "Free Association" status which, while granting the islands complete internal self-government, would leave responsibility for defence and foreign affairs with the U.S. However, the