

S.T.D. working of Delhi, Lucknow and Jaipur

336. SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that subscriber trunk, dialling system from Delhi to Lucknow and Delhi to Jaipur has not been working satisfactorily and the subscribers often get wrong connections; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to remedy the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The S.T.D. systems from Delhi to Jaipur and Lucknow are working satisfactorily. Periodical test observations are taken to check the quality of service and remedial actions taken wherever necessary. Recent observations indicate percentage of wrong connections is less than 2 per cent.

Hindi Telephone Directory

337. SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a Committee was set up to improve the quality of the Hindi Telephone Directory ;

(b) if so, whether the Committee has submitted its report; and

(c) what action Government have taken on the recommendations contained in the report ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Committee is expected to submit its report shortly.

Expansion to STD service

338. SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to introduce STD service in some more cities ; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following cities are expected to be added to the STD map of India during 1977-78.

1. Bharatpur
2. Bhatinda
3. Bulandshahr
4. Burdwan
5. Cannanore
6. Hissar
7. Jodhpur
8. Kakinada
9. Kalyan
10. Mohali
11. Moradabad
12. Muzzafarnagar
13. Mysore
14. Patiala
15. Siliguri
16. Sitapur
17. Udhampur
18. Visakhapatnam.

Regional Passport Office, New Delhi

339. SHRI RAGHBIR SINGH GILL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an article which was published in the 'Hindustan Times' of the 30th May, 1977 under the caption "Focus" regarding the working of Regional Passport Office, New Delhi; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to streamline the functioning of the Office ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In view of the sharp increase in workload of all the Regional Passport Offices, which, in 1976, was about 50 per cent more

than that in 1975. Government have under taken a review of working methods and procedures relating to the issue of pass ports. Studies have been carried out, particularly in the Regional Passport Office, Delhi, on the basis of which measure for simplifying existing procedures and improving working methods are being implemented.

Reduction in the prices of steel products

340. SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO :

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA :

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to reduce the prices of steel products now in stock with the public sector steel plants;

(b) if so, to what extent the prices are proposed to be reduced ; and

(c) what is the present stock position with each of these plants ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Stock position as on 31-5-1977 at each of steel plants is indicated below :—

	(In ,000 tonnes)
(i) Bhilai	89.1
(ii) Rourkela	65.8
(iii) Durgapur	42.6
(iv) Bokaro	28.3
(v) IISCO	19.0
	<hr/> 244.8

Paris Conference on Economic Co-operation

341. SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA :

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the subjects which were discussed at the international conference on economic co-operation held recently in Paris;

(b) whether any decisions were taken at the said conference; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE) : (a) The discussions were wide-ranging and covered the whole gamut of North-South relations in such fields as Energy, Raw Materials, Development and Financial Affairs.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) There was some progress in the field of official Development Assistance (ODA) and the developed countries have accepted a commitment "progressively and substantially" to increase their ODA. This contrasts with the stagnant or even declining trend in ODA in recent years. Tapan made a formal announcement at the Conference of its intention to more than double its ODA over next 5 years and some other developed countries are likely to act in the same sense. While this will still leave them a long way away from the internationally accepted target of 0.7 per cent of GNP, we regard it as at least a modest if long overdue step in the right direction.

There was also some progress in the discussions on the creation of a Common Fund as a key instrument in the Integrated Programme for Commodities. The purposes, objectives and other constituent elements of the Common Fund will be further negotiated in UNCTAD.

The developed countries have proposed a Special Action Programme with a funding of \$ 1 billion for assistance to poorer countries.

Agreement was also reached in the field of Food and Agriculture and the development of infrastructure, particularly in African countries.

A copy of the Report of the Conference, which records both agreements and disagreements, is placed on the Table of the House.