

beds can be reserved on payment basis. At present more than 28 lakh family units of insured persons out of total coverage of 56 lakhs are being provided hospitalisation facilities.

(b) The Committee on Perspective Planning appointed by the Corporation had recommended that medical care of an adequate standard should be provided uniformly throughout the country to insured persons and their families.

(c) The recommendation of the Committee is being implemented by the State Governments, who are responsible for the provision of medical care under the Employees' State Insurance Scheme, progressively.

Indian students studying abroad

922. PROF. RAMLAL PARIKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of Indian students studying in foreign countries at present; and

(b) whether there is any reciprocal arrangement between India and those countries regarding grant of financial assistance to Indian students studying there and the students of those countries studying in India ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS) : (a) and (b) The information, is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House as early as possible.

National Labour Institute Courses in South Asian and African countries

923. SHRI SYED AHMED HASHMI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Labour Institute proposes to conduct courses in the field of Labour, Behavioural Sciences, Work Systems etc., in the South Asian and African countries;

(b) if so, what are the terms on which such courses are proposed to be conducted in these countries;

(c) what are the names of the countries where these courses are proposed to be conducted and whether the International Labour Organisation are providing some assistance for such courses; and

(d) by which, such courses are likely to be started ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA) : (a) No Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Alleged discourtesy shown to Members of Parliament by the Indian High Commission in Australia

924. SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Members of Parliament were not shown normal courtesies by the Indian High Commission in Australia when they had gone there on the Air India's inaugural flight to Sydney and Perth during May-June this year; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government in the matter ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS) : (a) We have not received any such complaint from any Member of Parliament who travelled by this inaugural flight.

(b) Does not arise.

Telephone facilities in rural areas

925. SHRI JANARDHANA REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to provide telephone facilities in remote villages in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (DR. SHANKER DAYAL SHARMA) : (a) and (b) Places in remote localities not having a telephone exchange within a radius of 40 kms have been included in the policy for provision of Long Distance Public Call Offices (LD PCOs), subject to the anticipated revenue being at least 25% of the annual recurring expenditure for ordinary areas, 15% for backward areas and 10% for hilly areas. LD PCOs were provided at 60 such remote places in 1974-75 and at 130 places in 1975-76. Proposals for 262 such places have been approved.

Australian Prime Minister's criticism of India's Policy on the Indian Ocean

926. SHRI F. M. KHAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Australian Prime Minister while on the soil of another country had criticised India's policy on the Indian Ocean; and

(b) if so, whether Government of India have issued any rejoinder to clarify their stand in this regard ?