

diameter such that there is good thermal contact between the tubes and the plate. It is housed in a cover box of heat insulating material and having a glass window for allowing the Sun's radiation to fall on the blackened plate. The absorber is oriented due south at an angle equal to (Latitude angle + 15°) for winter use.

This absorber is connected to the storage tank, kept at a certain height; cold water at the bottom of the tank flows down to the absorber. Heated water rises to the top of the tank because of its lower density. This automatic circulation—thermosyphon as it is technically known—starts a little after sunrise and stops when the Sun goes down.

On cloudy days or when the load is more than the design value, thermostatically controlled immersion heater fixed to the tank can be pressed into service.

The manufacturing cost will vary with the market rates but it is estimated to be about Rs. 700 per unit which may be less if produced on a large scale.]

#### AWARD OF "PADMA VIBHUSHAN" TO SECRETARIES OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

180. SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any decision has been taken that only the retiring Secretaries of the Government of India would be awarded "Padma Vibhushan" if any award is to be given to them;

(b) whether it is a fact that police investigations on a charge of corruption are proceeding against one of the recipients of "Padma Shri" award in Delhi; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative who was responsible for recommending his name?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA) :

(a) There is no stipulation that Padma

Vibhushan should be awarded only to retiring Secretaries to the Government of India or if a retiring Secretary is to be given an award, it must be Padma Vibhushan.

(b) and (c) No such investigations are proceeding under any law against any person who was awarded Padma Shri in Delhi on the last Republic Day. An inquiry into the soundness of certain official acts with which several officers were concerned, including one of the recipients, is however being made.

#### TALKS WITH WEST GERMANY ON AIR SERVICES

181. CHAUDHARY A. MOHAMMAD : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that an Indian delegation visited West Germany to resume talks with that country on air services; and

(b) if so, what was the outcome of the talks?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the talks, the two delegations reviewed the operating plans and programmes of Air India which is operating services through Frankfurt, and of Lufthansa, the German airline, which is operating services through Calcutta and New Delhi.

The delegations agreed on a liberalisation of the provisions of the Air Services Agreement. The new arrangements have secured for Air India the right of passage through Germany twice a week for the large capacity aircraft viz. Boeing 747 (Jumbo Jets).

#### OCCUPANCY IN ASHOKA HOTELS LTD.

182. SHRI B. C. PATTANAYAK : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the occupancy in Ashoka Hotels Ltd. has shown some improvement;