

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the December 6, 2001/Agrahayana 15, 1923 (Saka)*

(Ministries: Prime Minister; Agro and Rural Industries; Atomic Energy;
Communications; Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution;
External Affairs; Information Technology; Labour; Parliamentary
Affairs; Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Planning;
Road Transport and Highways; Small Scale Industries;
Space; Statistics and Programme Implementation)

Total number of questions—155

Agro-based Industries in Assam

1810. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN:
Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL
INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the type of Agro-based industries
visualised in the North-Eastern States
including Assam;

(b) how many of these industries have
been established in these States including
Assam; and

(c) the amount invested by the Central
Government in these States, industry-wise?

Irradiation processing of food

1811. PROF. M. SANKARA-
LINGAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER
be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that irradiation
processing of food would help the country
save Rs. 25,000 crore worth foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether Government have not
so far followed such a process; and

(c) whether the Bhabha Atomic Research
Centre has submitted any proposal in this
regard?

Generation of nuclear power

1812. SHRI P. N. SIVA: Will the
PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared
a plan to increase generation of nuclear
power in the next twenty years;

(b) if so, whether any details have been
worked out with regard to setting up of more
nuclear power plants; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Post office recurring deposit claims

1813. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the
Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be
pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that claimants can
receive the benefit of Post Office Recurring
Deposit cases of missing persons after
waiting for the mandatory period of seven
years;

(b) if so, whether any such claims are
pending for settlement from July, 2001 till
date in Delhi;

(c) if so, the details thereof, indicating
the reasons for not settling these claims;

(d) whether there has been unnecessary delay in some cases even when all documents submitted by the claimants were in order;

(e) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(f) by when these claimants would receive their due claims?

Postal buildings in H.P.

1814. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foundation stone was laid by Government for construction of Postal buildings at BHIULI area in Mandi Town, Himachal Pradesh between 1993 and 1995, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) what action Government have taken or purpose to take in the matter?

Recovery of revenue from unauthorised wireless users

1815. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have failed to recover revenue amounting to Rs. 2481 crore from 6435 unauthorised wireless users including VSNL for period ranging from one to eighteen years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that no action, as provided in the India Telegraph Act, was taken against such users;

(c) if so, the reasons for not taking any action;

(d) what action has been taken to recover the dues; and

(e) the results thereof?

Out of order public telephones in Gujarat

1816. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of out of order public telephones in the rural areas of Gujarat;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to make them functional?

Telephone revenue arrears

1817. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telephone revenue arrears of DoT have increased as compared to the previous year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for increase in arrears; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to recover the arrears?

Refusal to provide funds for rural telephone facilities

†1818. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Finance Ministry has turned down the demand of Bharat Sanchar Nigam for Rs. 2500 crores to make available telephone facilities in the villages;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Finance Ministry has also refused to grant the amount of Licence fee received from the Companies and service charges on the

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

phones for village phone services during the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Poor performance of MTNL's mobile phone services

1819. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the new mobile phone started by MTNL is not giving satisfactory service;

(b) how many connections have been given so far;

(c) what is the reason for poor service; and

(d) what steps are being taken to improve the system?

Outstanding dues of BSNL

1820. SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUK-KARASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large amount of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited is outstanding and to be received from the defaulters;

(b) if so, the names of the defaulters and the amount defaulted;

(c) whether any steps have been taken by the Government to recover the outstanding amount; and

(d) if so, the impact thereof ?

Telephone exchanges in Assam

1821. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS

be pleased to state the number of telephone exchanges functioning presently in each district of Assam alongwith location and capacity thereof?

Faults in Telephone System in Assam

1822. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the telephone exchange-wise ratio of the faults recorded in telephone system in the rural and urban areas in Assam districts; and

(b) the number of electronic telephone exchanges functioning in the rural areas of the State, district-wise?

Sankhya Vahini Project

1823. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the progress of the Sankhya Vahini Project to create a high speed internet backbone in the country; and

(b) the progress of laying optical fibre in this regard?

Internet facilities in U.P.

†1824. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the cities of Uttar Pradesh where internet facilities have been provided during 2000-2001 or proposed to be provided, district-wise; and

(b) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Electronic telephone exchanges in UP

†1825. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to install electronic telephone exchanges in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the location-wise details thereof; and

(c) the allocations made for the said purpose during 2001-2002?

Launching of corridor by the Tata Cellular Ltd.

1826. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tata Cellular Limited has launched its third corridor in Andhra Pradesh—the Krishna corridor connecting Vijayawada and Tirupati;

(b) if so, whether 384-kilometre long Krishna corridor will also connect TCL's other two corridors, Costa and Deccan corridors;

(c) what is the investment to be made on this; and

(d) to what extent the cellular telephones would be made available in Andhra Pradesh during the current year?

Waiting list in Almora telephone exchange

†1827. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the installed capacity and the waiting-list of the Jalali and the Daula Telephone Exchanges located in Almora district of Uttranchal;

(b) whether Government are aware of the fact that hundreds of the applicants belonging to Nirkot village of that district are deprived of telephone connections for the reason that the department has not been able to decide as to which exchange that village must be connected with;

(c) if so, the action being taken against the guilty officers; and

(d) the details of the waiting list of said village and its affiliated Exchange and by when the telephone connections would be provided to all the applicants?

Competitors in international long distance telephony sector

1828. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the recent recommendations of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India not to limit the number of competitors in the international long-distance telephony sector; and

(b) if so, the details of these recommendations and the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

Post offices in Rajasthan

1829. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new post offices sanctioned and opened in the rural/desert areas of Rajasthan during 2000-2001, district-wise, till date;

(b) the time bound programme in this regard;

(c) the places where no post offices have been set up so far and whether these places fulfil the prescribed criteria for setting up of new post offices; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) whether Government have made any budgetary allocations for computer section/modernization of Post offices during 2001-2002 in the State?

New telephone connections

1830. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 36.81 lakh applicants were waiting for new telephone connections as on the 31st March, 2000 as compared to 19.83 lakh applicants in 1999;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Kerala had highest waiting list of 6.47 lakh applicants as on 31st March, 2000 and West Bengal had the least waiting list of 1.58 applicants;

(c) if so, what are the corresponding figures of applicants in waiting as on 31st March, 2001; and

(d) what action has been taken to reduce the waiting list of applicants?

Installation of telephone connections in Janakpuri Exchange

1831. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons residing in DDA Flats, Pockets-3, Bindapur, Dwarka, New Delhi who have applied for installations of telephone connections in the Janakpuri Telephone Exchange during the last six months;

(b) the number of applicants who have been provided with telephone connections, so far;

(c) by when, the remaining applicants are likely to be provided telephone connections;

(d) whether Government also propose to provide WLL phone to the remaining applications; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

Telephone facilities in villages

†1832. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in the country not connected with telephone facility at present;

(b) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has asked all the Telephone service companies to deposit five per cent of their net revenue in the social service companies to provide telephone facilities in the remaining and remote villages;

(c) if so, whether T.R.A.I. has fixed any time-limit for the same; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

PMG Office at Jabalpur

†1833. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the stand taken by Government over the demand of opening of a PMG Office at Jabalpur;

(b) whether any proposal is pending in this regard; and

(c) whether opening of a PMG Office at Jabalpur would be an appropriate step?

Dues from cellular companies

1834. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount due from the cellular companies, company-wise; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) what steps have been taken to recover the same?

Outstanding telephone arrears

1835. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an amount of more than rupees 1066 crore was outstanding against the telephone subscribers as on 1st July, 2000 and more than 88 per cent of outstanding arrears are against the private subscribers;

(b) if so, what are the latest arrears of telephone dues, category-wise; and

(c) what concrete efforts are being made by the department to recover huge outstanding arrears from private subscribers?

Telephone facility in villages of Gujarat

1836. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Gram Panchayats provided with the public phone facility in Gujarat, district-wise;

(b) the number of Gram panchayats proposed to be provided with such facility by March, 2001;

(c) by when, the said facility is likely to be provided to the remaining Gram panchayats in the State; and

(d) the steps proposed/being taken to reduce the fault rate?

Out of order public telephones

†1837. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that most of the public telephones installed at public places remain out of order;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any steps to improve this service?

Telephone on demand in Andhra Pradesh

1838. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether telephone is available on demand in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if not, what is the present status of DoT's plans to provide telephone on demand in the State;

(c) by when telephone would be available on demand in the State; and

(d) what is the current position of the State in availability of telephone *vis-a-vis* other States?

Expansion of telecom network in A.P.

1839. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether telecom network is being expanded in the villages and Tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Speed Post service in A.P.

1840. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is present status of Speed Post service available in the post offices of Andhra Pradesh, district-wise;

(b) whether Government have any plans to expand the service further in the State; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Business Development Directories

1841. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to improve its activities through Business Development Directories;

(b) whether any new product has been launched by the Business Development Directory;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what steps Government have taken or proposed to take to rectify the deficiencies in Speed Post service?

VPT in the country

1842. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Village Public Telephone (VPT) installed during 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, State-wise;

(b) the budget allocation made for each State for the above purpose during the above period; and

(c) the details of Government's programmes in this regard?

Delay in sorting of mail

1843. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Posts conducts National Test Letter Runs to test the efficiency of mail sorting and delivery system in metropolitan cities;

(b) if so, whether it was found that almost 50 per cent of the mail was delivered late and sorting could not be conducted properly in Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai post offices; and

(c) whether automatic mail processing systems commissioned in metro cities are grossly underutilised, while extra amount is spent on manual sorting?

Delay in execution of projects by civil wing

1844. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Posts has a separate civil wing for planning and execution of its civil works;

(b) if so, whether on an average each postal circle executes less than one project per year with an average cost of just Rs. 21.00 lakhs per project;

(c) whether out of 27 projects completed during 1993—98 only 9 were completed on schedule and the rest were delayed by 10 to 51 months; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons for the delay in execution of the 18 projects?

Licences for long distance telephone services

1845. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the private companies granted licences by the Department of Telecommunications to run National long distance telephone services in the country;

(b) whether some applications are still pending;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to clear these applications?

Sankhya Vahini Project

1846. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sankhya Vahini Project is facing closure in the wake of Carnegie Mellon University of US withdrawing from the project;

(b) if so, whether the reasons adduced by the Carnegie Mellon University for withdrawal from the joint project are red-tapism and in-ordinate delay;

(c) what are the reasons for bureaucratic bungling and inaction in such sensitive areas involving overseas collaborators; and

(d) whether Government would ensure that such technology-oriented projects are divested from bureaucratic dominance?

Internet telephony

1847. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to provide the benefits of Internet

telephony to the customers from April 1, 2002;

(b) if so, how many customers would be benefited; and

(c) out of which, how many customers in Karnataka would be benefited?

Reliance plan to destroy VSNL

1848. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI:
SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'how reliance plans to destroy VSNL with liberalisation of telecom' as appeared in the Asian Age, New Delhi dated the 27th April, 2001;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government and CBI have initiated an inquiry into sharp upward movement in the entire dealing occurred by one Vice President based at Mumbai of Reliance telecom; and

(d) if so, the findings thereof?

Consumer Protection Act, 1986

1849. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently carried out major amendments to the Consumer Protection Act, 1986;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the impact of these amendments on the growth and strengthening of consumer movement in the country?

Imported edible oils

1850. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of imported edible oils allocated to the States/UTs during 2000-2001;

(b) whether any State has complained about inadequate supply to meet the demand;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken to fulfil the demand?

Rejection of wheat by Iraq

1851. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been put to distress with the rejection of another consignment of wheat by Iraq as appearing in the 'Navbharat Times' dated the 1st November, 2001;

(b) whether it was rejected due to fungi found in the said consignment;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the loss suffered as a result thereof?

Off-take of foodgrains under open market prices

1852. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is negligible off-take of foodgrains under the

present open market prices fixed by Government; and

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that Government are contemplating to export the surplus stocks?

Antyodaya Anna Yojana in Orissa

1853. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Antyodaya Anna Yojana launched by Government has helped in providing highly-subsidised foodgrains to the poorest of the poor families in Orissa where starvation deaths have been reported;

(b) if so, the details of the same;

(c) the number of families who fall under such scheme; and

(d) the States which are implementing this scheme?

Food Management Policy

†1854. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the Unstarred Question 1985 given in the Rajya Sabha on 9th August, 2001 and state:

(a) whether Government have received recommendations of Prof. Abhijit Sen Committee;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by Government on each of the recommendations?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Increase in fake ration cards

†1855. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been increase in number of fake ration cards in many parts of the country;

(b) if so, whether Government are taking any action to prevent this malpractice; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Selling of sugar quota in open market

1856. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar factories have been allowed to sell up to 10 per cent more than their quota in open market;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps have been envisaged for preventing any possible misuse of this facility by sugar factories?

Rotten foodgrains

†1857. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 742 given in the Rajya Sabha on 1st March, 2001 and state:

(a) the total quantum and the details of foodgrains that has rotten actually together with the quantum of foodgrains sold at nominal prices, district-wise;

(b) whether non-lifting is the only factor responsible for the rotting of the foodgrains or whether mismanagement is also responsible for it; and

(c) if so, the action taken against the guilty persons?

Construction of godowns by private entrepreneurs

1858. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued necessary directions to the Food Corporation of India to give guarantee for additional 15 lakh Mts. godowns for 7 years to be constructed by private entrepreneurs, being essential for Rabi 2002 crop;

(b) if so, the details of the directions so issued;

(c) by when the godowns are expected to be constructed; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Import of sugar

1859. SHRI P. N. SIVA:
SHRI R. SARATH KUMAR:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the threat of imports of sugar has adversely affected the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, its implications noticed so far on farmers; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Bank guarantee on sale of rice

1860. SHRI R. SARATH KUMAR:
SHRI P. N. SIVA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any provision for presenting per quintal bank guarantee on rice sold by the FCI to rice exporters for export purpose; and

(b) if so, the details of the bank guarantees by various scheduled banks presented by the rice exporters since April, 2001 till date?

Surveys by BIS in Andhra Pradesh

1861. SHRI C. RAMACHAND-RAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has conducted a survey on jewellers and gold merchants in Delhi;

(b) if so, the findings thereof;

(c) whether such surveys were conducted in Andhra Pradesh to see if the sub-standard gold was being sold to public; and

(d) if so, how many jewellers were found selling gold not of the claimed purity and the action contemplated against them?

Expansion of Antyodaya Anna Yojana

1862. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to expand the 'Antyodaya Anna Yojana';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this programme would be expanded to all SC, ST families; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Changes in foodgrains procurement policy

1863. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have effected any change in its procurement policy of foodgrains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any State Governments have supported this programme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Fair price shop in Jangla, Shimla

†1864. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider for opening of a fair price shop in Jangla in Shimla district so that the common man, particularly farmers could get essential commodities at fair price;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Issuance of new ration cards

1865. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any guidelines to the State Governments

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.