

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the August 14, 2003/Sravana 23, 1925 (Saka)*

(Ministries : Prime Minister; Agro and Rural Industries; Atomic Energy; Communications and Information Technology; Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; Development of North Eastern Region; Disinvestment; External Affairs; Labour; Planning; Road Transport and Highways; Small Scale Industries; Space; Statistics and Programme Implementation)

Total number of questions—155

Tackling of economic crimes by CBI

2543. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
DR. M.N. DAS:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the CBI has set up Economic Intelligence Wing to tackle the growing menace of economic crimes in India;

(b) whether this wing represents Senior Officials of the Reserve Bank of India, some CBI officers of the Dy. Inspector General rank in probing Economic Offences in the country;

(c) if so, what would be the main task, power and functions of this wing;

(d) to what extent it would help to check the economic offenders; and

(e) whether any report would be submitted to Government from time to time?

Condition of ARIs in Karnataka

2544. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN:
DR. VIJAY MALLYA:

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of

the fact that the condition of traditional rural and cottage industries has been deteriorating and are on the verge of closure especially in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve their condition and the extent to which Government have succeeded in improving the situation?

Reduction in interest rate of loan

2545. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to reduce the interest rate on loans given for starting agro and rural industries and whether appropriate authorities would be recommended suitably in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Funds allocated for PMRY in U.P.

†2546. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any funds have been

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

allocated to Uttar Pradesh under the Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana in the year 2002-03; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Disbursement under PMRY in Andhra Pradesh

2547. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge gap in bank-wise number of persons recommended and actual disbursement made by the banks under the PMRY in the State of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years, year-wise and bank-wise;

(c) the reasons for such huge gaps; and

(d) the remedial measures being taken by Government in this regard?

Promotion of KVIC

†2548. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are keeping in view the factors like modern technique and modern fashion for promoting Khadi and Village Industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Modernisation of Khadi textiles

2549. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken to improve and modernise Khadi Textiles for better acceptability and popularity;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government have signed an MoU with the Textiles Committee to make available laboratories for quality testing and certification of khadi products; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Expansion of oil production industries

†2550. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been formulated by Government for the development and expansion of the oil production industry at the rural level by crushing the oilseeds produced in the country;

(b) if so, the outline of the scheme and the assessment made by Government regarding the number of people who earn at present their livelihood through this industry throughout the country;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Multinational Companies have already entered in this industry; and

(d) if so, the names of such MNCs?

Setting up of rural industries

2551. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to set up door-to-door industries in the rural areas of the country on the pattern of Japan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government to industrialise the villages?

CBI inquiry on misuse of Modular laboratories

2552. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government had ordered a CBI inquiry to investigate the misuse of Modular laboratory No. 3-319-S, Trombay, Mumbai during the year 2000;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the CBI has since submitted the report;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action taken by Government thereon?

Misuse of BARC laboratories

2553. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether instances of gross misuse of BARC's laboratories in the recent past by Government authorities for unofficial purposes, have come to Government's notice;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken thereon?

Installation of Nuclear Power Plants

2554. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Nuclear Power Corporation of India has surveyed

the sites for the location of nuclear power plants for electricity generation in power deficient States;

- (b) if so, the sites identified and how much power generation is being targeted;
- (c) whether any site for the State of Madhya Pradesh has been identified;
- (d) whether any time schedule has been finalised for the installation and commissioning of these plants; and
- (e) whether Government have made any scheme for providing power to different States?

Branch Post Offices in Himachal Pradesh

†2555. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether criteria for opening sub post offices are relaxed in remote, hilly and bordering States like Himachal Pradesh;
- (b) if so, the details of conditions which are being relaxed;
- (c) the number of sub post offices proposed to be opened and upgraded in Himachal Pradesh during the Tenth Five Year Plan; and
- (d) the efforts being made to achieve the target and the action plan thereof?

Broadband services on commercial line

2556. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have a

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

proposal to introduce broadband services on commercial lines;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) in that regard; and

(c) the cities in which broadband services would be introduced in the first instance?

Post offices in J&K

2557. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices working in Jammu and Kashmir, district-wise;

(b) whether Government propose to increase and upgrade the existing post offices;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the criteria adopted for upgradation of the post offices?

Mobile rates of MTNL and private companies

†2558. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mobile rates of MTNL are at par with the mobile rates of other private companies;

(b) the position with regard to the use of MTNL service in comparison to other private companies; and

(c) the details thereof?

Increase in cellular phone users

2559. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of cellular phone users is growing in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

Village public telephones

2560. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of village public telephones installed in the country upto the March, 2003, State-wise;

(b) whether a very high proportion of the installed VPTs remain non-functional;

(c) if so, percentage thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to run these VPTs satisfactorily?

Exemption of officers from liability

2561. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether section 6 and 43 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1893 stipulates exemption to officers from liability of loss, delay, misdelivery and damage;

(b) whether this exemption is obsolete and if not, why the officers are not charged with dereliction of duty and deficiency; and

(c) whether Government propose to amend such obnoxious sections which creates hurdles in the efficient administration of the Department and if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Closure of M.I.T.

2562. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to close the operations of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and is likely to be replaced by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) for various research projects;

(b) if so, what are the details of termination of MIT in India;

(c) how many research projects were there in hand of MIT at the time of termination of their contract; and

(d) whether MIT was studying low cost rural communication system, word computer, tomorrow's tools and digital village, and if so, what would be the fate of these projects after the termination of their services?

Capacity of telephone exchange

†2563. SHRI VEER SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the capacity of the telephone exchange of Sector 19, NOIDA, district Gautambudh Nagar;

(b) the capacity of the OCB and E-10-B telephone exchanges of Sector 18, NOIDA;

(c) the reasons for recovering charges of the bill at different rates from Sector 19 exchange at NOIDA to Network Exchanges;

(d) the details of the charging rentals on the basis of exchange capacity of NOIDA

exchange by keeping telephone exchanges under Ghaziabad, Sikandarabad and Khurja SDCA;

(e) the name of exchanges which have been kept under Ghaziabad, Sikandarabad and Khurja (SDCA) and the reasons therefor; and

(f) the details of the call pulse rates prescribed on residential phones, distance-wise?

Retirement benefits to employees

†2564. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. is offering pension and gratuity on the pay scales of IDA/CDA to the employees retired since October, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the retirement benefit to employees/officers would be paid by Government or by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd.; and

(c) the detailed outlines of retirement benefit?

VRS in BSNL/MTNL

†2565. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to introduce VRS for employees and officers working in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, this scheme is likely to be introduced and the outlines thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Garuda Mobile Service

2566. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether with the increase in subscribers for Garuda Mobile Service the Department is facing problem in providing connectivity to new subscribers;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the imports made by MTNL during the last three years for providing mobile service including name of the countries and companies;

(d) whether all the imported equipments are being put in use; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

WLL technology in the country

2567. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated strategy to introduce WLL Technology in rural and semi-urban areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government have initiated any action against the basic telephone operators for not fulfilling their commitments in providing service in rural areas;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Technology for telephone facilities in rural areas

†2568. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified the technology for setting up of telephone facilities in rural areas keeping in view the geographical and social conditions of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof so that the operation of telephone facilities could be made smooth and cost effective; and

(c) the various kinds of technologies utilised for setting up of telephone facilities in the rural areas of the country, so far?

Allotment of telephone connections in H.P.

2569. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone connections have been allotted during the year 2001—03 in the villages and P.O. Sansai of District Kangra of Himachal Pradesh and how many registrants are in waiting list and the number of persons that have applied for fresh telephone connections;

(b) whether it is a fact that a number of persons from village and P.O. Sansai have applied for the connections during the last year but they are not getting telephone connections; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the reasons for non-installation of connections and by when, registrants would get fresh connections?

FDI sectoral cap in telecom

2570. DR. M. N. DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether following objections raised by the security agencies to increase the FDI sectoral cap in telecom, the Department of Telecommunications has recommended an alternative route of placing FII investments outside the existing sectoral cap subject to an overall cap of 74 per cent;

(b) if so, whether the proposal of 'Universal licence' regime that is to replace the present system of separate licenses for basic, cellular and long-distance operations has also been considered;

(c) if so, to what extent these decisions have been approved and finalised; and

(d) the steps being taken to implement them?

Sale of Personal Computers

2571. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sale of Personal Computers is on the rise in the country;

(b) if so, the number of Personal Computers sold during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is corresponding increase in E-scrap, which is a health hazard;

(d) if so, whether Government propose to issue guidelines on the safe disposal of computer waste; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Branch post office at Nandla, Himachal Pradesh

†2572. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open branch post office in village Nandla, in Shimla of Himachal Pradesh, during the year 2003-04;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Telephone connections in Himachal Pradesh

2573. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of waiting list of telephone connections registered during the period from the 1st January, 2000 to the 30th June, 2003 in the Sub-Division Office (T), Rehan and Dehra in District Kangra, Himachal Pradesh;

(b) the present status thereof; and

(c) by when, this waiting list would be cleared?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Mobile phone users

†2574. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mobile phone users in the rural and urban areas of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the number of users likely to be increased during the current financial year; and

(c) the reasons for increase in the number of mobile phone users and decrease in the demand of basic (Land line) telephones?

Loss of registered letters

2575. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of registered letters lost by the Postal Department during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the amount of compensation paid for the loss of registered letters;

(c) whether Government have enquired into the reasons for loss of such registered letters sent in India and abroad, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken by Government to prevent the loss of registered articles by the Postal Department?

Shifting of postal life insurance to Jharkhand

†2576. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it takes months for the Department of Posts (Jaipur Circle) in transferring "Postal Life Insurance" to Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details along with the names of the persons whose request have been received for transfer of "Postal Life Insurance" to Jharkhand from Jaipur Circle during the last six months;

(c) whether all these have been transferred; and

(d) if not, by when, these would be transferred?

Development of Indian Language Technology

2577. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of programmes undertaken by Government for the development of Indian Language Technology;

(b) the allocation made for the purpose to these programmes during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the outcome of the programmes?

Decrease in BSNL/MTNL land line market

2578. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the losing grip on the Indian market by the country's major landline operators, both BSNL and MTNL during the last two years;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve the situation; and

(c) the details of the competitive approach adopted by the BSNL and the MTNL in relation to the private operators who have been reducing their tariff rates continuously?

Telephone exchange/line in Pauri Garhwal

†2579. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the people of Tarpalisaintha Patti Dhajulie of the district of Pauri Garhwal, Uttaranchal are demanding for opening of telephone exchange and laying of telephone line in Tarpalisaintha for many years;

(b) if so, by when, this facility would be provided; and

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

Mobile telephone facility in Uttaranchal

†2580. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the districts in the State of Uttaranchal where mobile telephone facility is available;

(b) the percentage of the total area in the State which is availing the above-mentioned facility;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that in most cities of the State

connected with mobile services, mobile sets do not work; and

(d) if so, the details of the measures proposed to be taken to improve the standard of mobile telephone services in the State?

Printing of telephone directory

†2581. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are certain fixed standards for inviting tenders for printing of the telephone directory;

(b) if so, whether the experience certificate of the tenderer is sufficient in this regard;

(c) if so, whether Government are aware of the fact that in the Meerut region of the Sanchar Nigam added their own conditions in the tender to benefit a particular tenderer; and

(d) if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard?

Loss to MTNL

2582. SHRI B. J. PANDA: MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MTNL has suffered 48 per cent dip in its net profit for the year ended on the 31st March, 2003;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to control the loss;

(c) whether it is also a fact that despite this decline in net profit, the Company has

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

recommended tax free 45 per cent dividend;
and

(d) whether the Company has a dip in their subscribers base, if so, the action plan to arrest this?

Mobile telephone to postmen

2583. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a scheme to provide WLL facilities to 8000 villages devoid of telecom facilities through 1800 rural postmen carrying WLL mobile phones;

(b) whether these postmen are to be paid commission from the earnings of the rural mobile phone facility, if so, the details of the scheme, indicating the cost involved therein; and

(c) the steps, so far, taken to implement the scheme?

Replacement of telephone exchanges in Andhra Pradesh

2584. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans for the replacement of all analogue telephone exchanges in Andhra Pradesh by digital electronic exchanges within a time frame; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Cellular Services in Guwahati by Reliance

2585. SHRI INDRAMONI BORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the cellular phone services provided by the sole provider the Reliance, at Guwahati has not been running smoothly to the dismay of the subscribers;

(b) whether any steps are being taken by Government for improvement of the services; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Postmen with telephone

2586. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to cover an additional 8,000 villages across the country under the scheme of village postman offering telephone services;

(b) if so, whether the project taken by BSNL, in co-ordination with the Department of Posts on a pilot basis in 8,000 villages since December last, was a success;

(c) if so, the total villages that would be covered under this scheme in the year 2003-04;

(d) whether private sector has not been able to make their commitment on rural telephony; and

(e) if so, the punishment that has been given to them for not honouring their commitment?

Rural and urban telephone subscribers

†2587. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge gap in the number of telephone subscribers of rural and urban areas of the country;

(b) if so, the respective number of telephone subscribers in urban and rural areas of the country, till March 2003; and

(c) what additional steps Government have taken, so far, to increase the number of telephone subscribers in rural areas?

Video conferencing facility

†2588. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal to connect the famous Badrinath and Kedarnath Temples by video conferencing facility at the earliest;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, the said facility would be started?

Poor postal services

2589. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI JHUMUK LAL
BHENDIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many post offices are located in main districts in parts of rural India and that the postal services are poor in far flung villages in certain districts;

(b) if so, the States in which post offices are situated only in districts;

(c) whether Government have plans to provide post offices in all Gram Panchayats of the States;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Single operating licence

2590. SHRI C. RAMACHAND-
RAIAH:
SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that TRAI wants to bring all segments of the telecom market under a single operating licence covering fixed, mobile, domestic, long distance and international calls;

(b) whether it is also a fact that TRAI wish to have uniform rules for all players;

(c) whether Government are thinking of scrapping regional fragmentation;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) how it helps the end-consumer?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Tele-density

2591. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise tele-density (per 100 person) particularly in the States of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in the years 1991-92 and 1999-2000;

(b) whether tele-density has been very low for Madhya Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Landline connections

2592. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total land-line connections both in rural and urban areas separately at the end of the year 2002-03;

(b) the number of cellular subscribers in the country separately for rural and urban areas;

(c) what is the combined tele-density for rural and urban areas;

(d) the targets regarding tele-density set for the years 2005 and 2010; and

(e) how these targets are proposed to be achieved?

Community Information Centres in Tripura

2593. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of blocks in Tripura where Community Information Centres (CICs) have been set up;

(b) the number of blocks in the State where CIC projects are due to be set up; and

(c) the benefits derived/to be derived from these CICs?

STPI at Agartala

2594. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a decision has been taken to set up Software Technology Parks at Agartala;

(b) whether it is also a fact that STPI and State Government of Tripura have already come to an understanding in respect of the said Parks; and

(c) the progress made in the matter?

Benefit to private operators

2595. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private operators have been given undue benefit to the tune of Rs. 719 crore in relation with the Village Public Telephone System, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Department spent more than 90 crore rupees to provide VPTs on behalf of private operators; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Industrial units under IT

†2596. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of industrial units under Information Technology Industry has increased during the year 2002-03 in the country;

(b) if so, the number thereof in comparison to the year 2001-02 alongwith the number of these industrial units during the year 2002-03; and

(c) the names of the 20 such units out of these functional industrial units which have performed maximum business and the extent of business performed by them during the year 2002-03?

Investment by MTNL

2597. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mahanagar Telecom Nigam Limited has decided to invest Rs. 1,200 crore in 2003-04 for developing telecom backbone and infrastructure, including CDMA network;

(b) if so, what are the main projects that would be undertaken;

(c) whether the work on these projects have started; and

(d) if so, whether the MTNL also plans to expand its GSM and CDMA mobiles in the two Metros of which Mumbai would get an additional four lakh lines of both services?

Expansion of MTNL network

2598. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have asked MTNL to explore opportunities that would enable to company to expand its network and improve its financial condition; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by MTNL to achieve their objectives?

Increase in service tax for prepaid card

2599. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in service tax for prepaid card by private cell phone operators;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether hikes in service tax by private cell operators are in accordance with TRAI; and

(d) if so, the details of hike in service tax in the last three years?

Food subsidy to FCI

2600. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of food subsidy given by Government during the last two years, year-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) in what manner the subsidy has been utilised by the Food Corporation of India; and

(c) the amount of foodgrains lost in transit during the period?

Creation of Sugar buffer stock

2601. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to create a buffer stock of sugar;

(b) if so, the quantity of sugar in the proposed stock of sugar; and

(c) the estimate of sugar production in this years' ending *i.e.* September, 2003 and what was the sugar production last year?

Funds for godowns and cold storages

†2602. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of godowns and cold storages for suitable storage of foodgrains, State-wise;

(b) the amount of funds released by Government during the last three years for repair of old and dilapidated godowns and construction of new ones, State-wise; and

(c) if so, the number of States which have so far submitted the report on the utilisation of the said funds to the Centre?

Problems of sugarcane growers

2603. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any formula has been evolved to help the sugarcane growers out of the crisis faced by them; and

(b) the number of sugarcane growers suffering alongwith the latest figures of accumulated arrears of cane dues and other parameters of the crisis?

Sale of commodities in hotels at M.R.P.

2604. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Star category hotels and other fast food joints are not charging the customers according to Consumer Affairs Packaged Commodities Rules, 1997 on various items like cold drinks and drinking water;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what action Government have proposed against the owners of these hotels/fast food joints;

(d) whether it is also a fact that according to the above rules, all the items sold at the hotels are sold at printed Maximum Retail Price (MRP); and

(e) if so, how many five star hotels are not selling these commodities at MRP and the action taken against them by Government?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Recommendations made by “High Level Committee on long-term grain policy”

2605. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the status report of implementation by Government as on date, with regard to various recommendations and proposals as made through a report by the "High level Committee on long-term grain policy", July 2002; and

(b) what remedial measures are being taken by Government towards greater production and proper security of Food Distribution in view of the report having shown at all India level, much decrease in food production, area of cultivation and yield per hectare from 1999 which is a warning signal for a rapid negative growth of production?

District Consumer Protection Councils

2606. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of District Consumer Protection Councils set up, so far, in Andhra Pradesh under Consumer Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002;

(b) the number of cases decided by these Councils, District-wise;

(c) the time likely to be taken in setting up these Council in all the districts of Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) the details of the objectives of these Councils?

Stolen foodgrains from FCI

†2607. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of foodgrains that had been stolen from the godowns and stores of the Food Corporation of India during the last three years;

(b) whether Government have investigated all the cases;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the officers found responsible for the theft?

Sale of foodgrains through PDS

†2608. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sale of foodgrains through Public Distribution System has been reducing continuously for the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to boost the sale through Public Distribution System?

Memorandum on PDS

2609. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any memorandum from All India Fair Price Shop Dealers Federation Delhi, regarding Public Distribution System;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof;
and

(c) what action Government have taken thereon?

Foodgrains for ration card holders

2610. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of persons below poverty line in the country at present;

(b) what is the number of ration cards issued to them in order to enable them to purchase foodgrains at low rates; and

(c) what is the quantity of foodgrains to which a person below poverty line is entitled per month?

Sale of food grains at higher prices

†2611. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the matter of taking more money from consumers due to non-availability of stock of foodgrains in shops has been revealed during raids on two dozen ration shops in Delhi;

(b) if so, the action taken against these shopkeepers and whether any stern action is proposed to be taken regarding cancellation of these shopkeepers' licences; and

(c) the details thereof?

Study of issues concerning consumer protection

2612. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have mooted a proposal to set up six working groups to study various issues related to consumer protection and suggest measures for dealing with them effectively;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the consumer clubs would be set up in schools to create awareness about consumer rights; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Outstanding amount of sugarcane growers

†2613. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether outstanding amount of sugarcane growers has been assessed by Government;

(b) if so, the total outstanding amount during June, 2003;

(c) whether Government have decided to allocate Rs. 600 crores for paying the outstanding amount; and

(d) if so, allocation made to the farmers out of the above amount, State-wise and amount-wise?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Financial package for sugarcane farmers

†2614. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

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

(a) whether Government have sanctioned Rs. 600 crores from the Sugar Development Fund for the four Sugarcane growing States, namely, Punjab, Haryana, U.P. and Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, whether this is done to assist the sugarcane farmers who were not paid as per the State Advisory Prices (SAP) especially in Maharashtra; and

(c) if so, Government's stand with regard to providing assistance from the said fund to Maharashtra?

Purchase and storage of wheat by FCI

2615. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of wheat purchased by Food Corporation of India and other State agencies during the period April to June, 2003, State-wise and agency-wise;

(b) the stock of wheat with the Food Corporation of India as on 30th June, 2003; and

(c) the steps being taken by Food Corporation of India to reduce its transit and storage losses which are quite high as compared to those of such agencies in developed countries?

Hike in prices of essential commodities

2616. SHRI R. K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA:

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

(a) whether Government are aware of hike in prices of essential commodities every year and the reasons advanced therefor, like, floods, monsoons and drought, these being natural events happening every year;

(b) whether Government feel its responsibility to overcome such problems beforehand and ensure that there are no price hikes because of these factors; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

Finalisation of accounts by FCI

2617. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India has not finalised its accounts for the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action proposed against those responsible for irregularities?

Beneficiaries of Annapurna Scheme in Orissa

2618. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of beneficiaries of 60 years and above, identified so far under 'Annapurna Scheme' in Orissa;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the total quantity of foodgrains allotted and distributed so far under the scheme in Orissa; and

(c) the fresh steps taken by Government to widen the scope of the scheme in order to cover more people living below poverty line in Orissa?

Extension of Antyodaya Scheme in Karnataka

2619. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked the State Government of Karnataka to extend Antyodaya Scheme to two lakh families in Karnataka;

(b) if so, how many families in Karnataka have been benefited so far from the above scheme;

(c) the quantity of free foodgrains supplied to Karnataka per month for the above scheme; and

(d) whether the Karnataka Government has sent the list of additional beneficiaries of the scheme?

PDS in tribal, hilly and remote areas

2620. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures being taken by Government for strengthening Public Distribution System in the country particularly in tribal, hilly and remote areas; and

(b) the role being played by State

Government to provide the quantity of food-grains to the poor people in the country?

Schemes for NER

†2621. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes declared by the Prime Minister in the Conference of the Chief Ministers of the North-Eastern Region held in January, 2000;

(b) the schemes that have been implemented so far;

(c) by when the remaining schemes would be implemented; and

(d) the reasons for the delay?

Disinvestment of HPCL and BPCL

2622. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Oil Corporation, BPCL and HPCL have doubled their profits in the year 2002-03 in comparison to 2001-02;

(b) if so, whether Government would agree to stop disinvestment process of these companies; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Privatisation of Maruti Udyog Limited

2623. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large chunk of equity in Maruti Udyog Limited (MUL) was lately

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

offered for public subscription and was over-subscribed;

(b) the reasons for privatisation of the only public sector automobile company and how far it was over-subscribed and at what rate on average the shares were sold;

(c) the profits earned by MUL during the last five years; and

(d) whether it paved the way for privatisation of some other profit earning public sector undertakings, if so, the details in this regard?

Profot making PSUs

2624. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether additional investments pumped into the 240 Central Public Sector Enterprises in the year 2001-02 and the PSUs registered 66 per cent profit;

(b) if so, the PSUs which have earned profit;

(c) how many are still running under loss; and

(d) whether in view of the successful implementation, the Government have decided not to disinvest them?

Disinvestment of PSUs

2625. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the disinvestment proposals;

(b) the PSU's slotted for disinvestment during the current financial year and the progress being made; and

(c) the target fixed during the last financial year and the achievements made?

Promotion of economic and commercial cooperation by Missions

2626. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps, if any, Government have taken in the last three years to reinforce the capacity and ability of Indian Missions abroad to undertake effective initiatives for promoting close economic and commercial co-operation with various countries; and

(b) in what manner Government propose to be pro-active in promoting National Economic interests particularly in the EU and in South-East Asia?

Terrorism as core issue between India and Pakistan

2627. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government agrees that terrorism, and not Kashmir, is the core issue between India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether Deputy Prime Minister had told USA that India is not asking Pakistan to abandon their views on Kashmir but change their views on terrorism during his visit in June, 2003 to USA;

(c) whether the nefarious and totally unacceptable activities of Pakistan's ISI were pointed out to the US also; and

(d) if so, the response thereto?

Suspension of Pakistan from Commonwealth

2628. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that

Pakistan is to remain suspended from Commonwealth; and

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

Anchoring of American Warships at Kochi

2629. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that American warships returning from Iraq were permitted entry into Kochi Port;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the duration of their stay at Kochi;

(c) whether permitting this ship at Kochi was against the spirit of the country's stand on the Iraq war; and

(d) Government's response thereto?

Military sale to Pakistan by Germany

2630. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Germany had lifted its ban on military sales to Pakistan; and

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

Civil war in African countries

†2631. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several African countries like Liberia and Congo, etc. are engaged in a fierce civil war;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that 33 lakhs people have died in Congo alone and Liberia is still bearing the brunt;

(c) if so, whether it is a fact that India being a leader of Non-Alligned Movement has failed to play its role in solving those problems; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Visit of Pakistani delegation

2632. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a recent Pakistani delegation, the largest ever business delegation, has *inter alia* urged to ease visa norms on the plea that such a policy would flourish the trade between the two countries;

(b) if so, what are their main demands;

(c) Governments' reaction thereon; and

(d) whether Pakistan Government is also expected to reciprocate our gesture?

"Oil for food" scheme

†2633. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering Iraq for "Oil for food" programme sponsored by the U.N.O.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far?

Indo-South Africa Co-operation

2634. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether talks were held recently

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

between India and South Africa for strengthening bilateral economic co-operation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of agreements signed between the two countries?

Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group meeting

2635. MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group meeting was held in last May in London; and

(b) if so, the decisions taken therein, especially to combat cross-border terrorism?

Government's role in Sri Lankan peace process

2636. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a senior Sri Lankan Tamil Leader has appealed to India to exert pressure on the International Community for democratizing the on-going peace process in the Island by including other Tamil groups instead of talking only to the LTTE, indirectly requesting India to get involved in the peace process; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the policy of our Government?

Tamil interpreters in Gulf countries

2637. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of problems faced by labourers going to Gulf countries from Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to appoint Tamil interpreters in Gulf embassies considering heavy concentration of labourers from the State;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Schools for children of diplomats

2638. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the countries in which Indian schools are being run for children of our diplomats abroad;

(b) the children of how many diplomats are studying in schools/universities abroad and in which countries; and

(c) the details of financial assistance/allowances being given to diplomats for this purpose?

US efforts to stop cross border terrorism in India

2639. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US President took up the issue of cross border terrorism with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf during June, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government are satisfied with the outcome of the USA efforts and optimistic of positive response from Pakistan?

Prime Minister's visit

2640. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Prime Minister met Heads of Germany, China and Russia during his visit abroad during May-June this year;

(b) if so, the details of the subject matters discussed and their response thereto; and

(c) what has been their stand on the cross border terrorism by Pakistan and the Kashmir issue?

Rehabilitation work in Iraq by Indian companies

2641. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian companies have received signals from Iraq for its post war development and rehabilitation;

(b) the names of Government and private Companies which have been doing work in the past in Iraq; and

(c) the details in this regard?

Visit of Israeli Prime Minister

2642. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the issues proposed to be discussed with the Prime Minister of Israel during his ensuing visit in September, 2003?

Indian nationals stranded in Tripoli

2643. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently 73 village youths from Pubjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, who got stranded in Tripoli, the capital of Libya, were lured for jobs by M/s Glomat Overseas Associates;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to check it?

Deputy Prime Minister's USA visit

†2644. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the issues discussed and agreements reached during the recent visit of Deputy Prime Minister to USA;

(b) whether any discussion took place on issues like Iraq and Pakistan; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Indo-Australian co-operation

2645. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Australia is exploring areas and issues for closer co-operation with India;

(b) if so, whether both India and Australia are seen as important components of stability in the Asia-Pacific region; and

(c) if so, what are the main issues on which both India and Australia have agreed to have a closer co-operation?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Pakistani national as Visa Officer in British High Commission

2646. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the British High Commission in New Delhi has appointed a former Pakistani National as a Visa Officer in High Commission's office;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Government's reaction thereto and whether Government have conveyed its feelings to the British Government on the proposed appointment; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Increase in staff strength in Indian and Pakistani High Commissions

2647. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the resumption of diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan, the staff strength in the two High Commissions is proposed to be brought to the original level;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) by when the resumption of trade between the two countries and the issuing of visas for tourists is likely to begin?

Death of Indian officers

†2648. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of officials working in the Ministry of External Affairs who had died in harness while posted abroad;

(b) whether Government have provided

jobs to the dependents of the deceased on compassionate grounds;

(c) if so, the number of such dependents who have been provided jobs on compassionate grounds;

(d) the number of applications for compassionate grounds pending for the approval of Government; and

(e) whether Government holds positive views on such applications?

POK Prime Minister's statement regarding Indo-Pak talks

2649. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have come across statement made by the POK Prime Minister that the armed struggle would intensify if Kashmiris were ignored during the parleys between India and Pakistan; and

(b) if so, whether Government conveyed any reaction to Pakistan on such remarks?

Extremist activities from Nepal

2650. DR. A.R. KIDWAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Nepal had become haven for criminals and a number of extremists activities are operating in Nepal;

(b) if so, whether India and Nepal have signed an agreement to share criminal intelligence through diplomatic channels;

(c) if so, to what extent this has helped both the countries to check the criminal menace operating for long in India and Nepal; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) the further steps being taken to improve the situation of controlling the criminal activities in both the countries?

Perks to lower staff in Indian missions

2651. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA:

SHRI C. RAMACHAND-RAIAH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether CAG has indicted the Ministry for bonus and other perks being given to the lower staff in various Indian Missions abroad, especially in Europe;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for extra privileges to them and remedial measures proposed to be taken to rectify the irregularities?

Implementation of Land Boundary Agreement between India and Bangladesh

2652. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether two joint Boundary Groups have been set up by the Governments of India and Bangladesh to resolve all pending issues relating to the implementation of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement between both the countries; and

(b) if so, the progress made so far?

Indian peace keeping forces

†2653. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian peace keeping forces have been sent to several countries under the aegis of United Nations Organisation in the past;

(b) if so, the number of soldiers sent alongwith the name of countries and the dates when these soldiers were sent by India;

(c) whether it is also a fact that several Indian soldiers have been killed during the peace keeping missions; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Indo-China joint working group

†2654. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a joint working group was constituted in the year 1998 to resolve the disputes between India and China;

(b) if so, the number of meetings held so far of the said group;

(c) the details of various disputes discussed in these meetings; and

(d) whether any of them has been sorted out, so far?

Functioning of P.F. Commissioner

2655. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Provident Fund Commissioner's office in Varanasi deprives pensions to the widows of its own employees;

(b) if so, the steps Government are taking to bring to book such acts of negligence and callousness;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether any action has been initiated against the culprits who are delaying payments of pensions on such a manner all over the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Workers interest in BALCO and Modern Foods

2656. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Committee tasked by Prime Minister to look into the disinvestment of BALCO and Modern Foods has found that the interests of the workers have been overlooked by Sterlite and Hindustan Lever; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Employees Pension Scheme

2657. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any applications of the retired factory workers in Kerala, who exercised the option under Employees Pension Scheme-95, are pending for the payment;

(b) whether the High Court of Kerala passed any direction to admit their claims and grant them pension;

(c) the stage at which the grant of EPF pension to those persons stands at present; and

(d) whether the State Government of Kerala considers to initiate any steps to grant them pension through the Regional Commissioner for EPF Thiruvanthapuram?

I.L.O's help for poverty alleviation

2658. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country has sought the help of the International Labour Organisation in rooting out poverty;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the ILO's response to the request?

Progress regarding eradication of child labour

†2659. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have written any letter to the Chief Ministers of such States where the child labour is prevalent emphasizing the need of holding regular discussion to monitor the constant progress with regard to abolition of the child labour;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the State Governments' reaction in this regard and the steps taken/proposed to be taken to eradicate this social evil;

(d) whether Government have received any relevant programme from the State Governments in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when, child labour is likely to be eradicated from the country?

Funds for Child Labour

2660. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a 13-year old Supreme Court's directive for setting up a

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

fund for the children working in hazardous conditions, is yet to be implemented and they continue to lose their lives and limbs while seeking out livelihood by making matches, crackers etc.; and

(b) if so, why this indifferent attitude to future citizens of India especially when every child is entitled to safeguards and Fundamental Rights guaranteed under the Constitutions?

Unemployment problem in Assam

2661. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any comprehensive scheme for solving unemployment problem in the State of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of the opportunities created for educated unemployed youth through the establishment of various industries in the State during the last three years?

Educated unemployed youth

2662. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of educated unemployed youth registered with the employment exchanges in Assam, during the last three years; and

(b) the steps being taken by Government for solving the unemployment problem of the State?

International Labour Organisation

2663. SHRI A VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether India consistently abstained from ratifying the Convention (No. 87) on Freedom of Association and Protection of Right to Organise and the Convention (No. 98) on Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining of International Labour Organisation (ILO);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken to ratify the above conventions?

Training opportunities

2664. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to provide training opportunities to the poor at affordable costs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner the funding would be arranged for it?

Unorganised welfare fund

2665. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the funds that have been allocated to his Ministry under unorganised welfare fund during the last five years; year-wise;

(b) the utilisation of the said funds during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the beneficiaries under this fund in the last five years, year-wise and State-wise?

Job position in organised sector

2666. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the organised sector in India shed 4.2 lakh jobs in the year 2001-02 and whether it marked the fifth consecutive year when jobs in this sector fell;

(b) if so, the job position in March each year since March, 1997 including the year 2002-03; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the job position in organised sector?

Dharna by ESI Doctors

2667. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Doctors of the Employees State Insurance hospitals and dispensaries in the capital have recently staged a dharna at ESI Headquarter, New Delhi; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the demands submitted by them and the action taken thereon?

Creation of jobs for 40 millions

2668. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether an expert group of economists and industrialists has worked out a blue-print for 40 million jobs for the Indian workforce by the year 2020;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to create an appropriate environment in the country in order to equip the youth to respond to the challenging opportunities to be made available on the implementation of the proposed blue-print?

Safety and health of the workers

†2669. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Labour Institutes set up in the country are capable to cater to the needs of the safety and health of the workers; and

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

Unemployment ratio

†2670. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether unemployment ratio has shown a downward trend during the last five years;

(b) if so, the details of the existing number of educated unemployed persons and the year-wise number of the same during the last five years;

(c) the names of the States having maximum number of educated unemployed persons;

(d) whether Government have formulated any special scheme to combat

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

the problem of educated unemployment; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Contract labour laws

2671. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a labour law on the Welfare and rationalisation of contract labour;

(b) if so, what are the other salient features of the proposed legislation;

(c) whether Government are thinking of introducing this law during the current Session of Parliament; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Increase in women job aspirants

2672. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of women seeking jobs through the employment exchanges has increased over the years; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to provide more placements to women job seekers to encourage educated women?

Survey of bonded labourers

2673. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted a district-wise survey of bonded labourers, recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of bonded labourers rehabilitated alongwith rehabilitation assistance provided during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by Government for rehabilitation of bonded labourers especially in rural and remote areas of the country?

EPF cover to employees in Karnataka

2674. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees, so far, covered under the Employees Provident Fund in Karnataka;

(b) whether it has come to Government's notice that a large number of employees working in rice mills and other factories in Bellary and other Districts are not covered under the Provident Fund Act; and

(c) whether Government would conduct extensive survey and ensure that all employees in establishments with more than 25 employees are covered under the Act?

Status of women in new high tech economy

2675. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the new high tech economy is leaving women behind; and

(b) whether women are being encouraged to join better-paying, higher-status and faster-growing professions such as systems analysts, software designers, engineers etc.?

Special programme for KBK region

2676. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has sanctioned two special programmes for KBK zone in Orissa under Rashtriya Shram Vikas Yojana (RSVY);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the projects that would be taken up with this aid; and

(c) the details of 100 per cent centrally aided projects sanctioned for KBK to boost economy of this region?

Gloomy picture of Indian economy

2677. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank Development Policy Review's assessment has recently painted a gloom and doom picture of Indian economy;

(b) if so, the detail of their findings; and

(c) Government's reaction thereon?

Share of service sector in GDP

†2678. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that share of service sector in the Gross Domestic Product of the country has increased since the start of the decade of nineties till end;

(b) if so, the percentage of this contribution;

(c) whether it is also a fact that rate in employment opportunities in organised sector of the country has also increased;

(d) if so, the growth rate thereof; and

(e) what are the reasons for the difference between percentage of increase in gross domestic product *vis-a-vis* employment?

Financial package for Kerala

2679. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the competent authority has announced financial supports for Kerala in "Kumarakom Package" and financial aids in Global Investment Meet (GIM) within the last three years;

(b) if so, the details including the financial and other supports declared under "Kumarakom package" and Global Investment Meet and the actual support given as on today, category-wise;

(c) whether there is any delay in providing the above support; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Socio-economic reforms in Chhattisgarh

2680. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of any new socio-economic reforms which Government plan to introduce in Chhattisgarh especially for the backward regions;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government have received any proposals for the same; and

(c) if not, whether there has been any formal representations by any NGOs regarding the same?

Poverty ratio

2681. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what was the poverty ratio in 1993-94;

(b) what is the present poverty ratio; and

(c) what is the projection estimate by 2012?

Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989

2682. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) by when the draft notification dated 21st January, 2003 to amend the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 to clarify confusion related to application of IT to Transport Sector created by notification dated 31st May, 2002 would be issued;

(b) the reasons for the delay to release the draft notification;

(c) the steps being taken to implement the smart card based vehicle registration certificates in various States; and

(d) the details thereof?

Progress of six-lane highway project

†2683. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress in construction of six-lane express highways at present;

(b) the States where work of highways is yet to be completed; and

(c) whether the cost of construction is escalating?

Amount allocated under CRF

†2684. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the amount allocated from the Central Road Fund during the year 2003-04, State-wise; and

(b) the details of the schemes formulated and the amount allocated for maintenance of highways and construction work during the current year?

Golden Quadrilateral Project

2685. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that anticipated targets are not being achieved in the Golden Quadrilateral National Highway Development Project launched by Prime Minister in 1999, involving an estimated cost of Rs. 58,000 crores over ten years;

(b) if so, what are the annual targets, whether these were achieved during the financial years 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any effective monitoring mechanism exists for it; and

(e) if so, the periodicity thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Accidents on National Highways

2686. SHRISWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of highways in the country, during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) the number of road accidents on the highways, during the last five years, year-wise;

(c) the number of lives lost each year during the last five years; and

(d) the medical facilities available on the highways for people injured in accidents?

Highways in Karnataka

2687. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:
SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans to convert more State Highways into National Highways in the coming years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the expenditure incurred on the conversion of State Highways and their maintenance in the country especially in the Karnataka?

Upgradation of roads in Gujarat

2688. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Government's request for upgradation of roads of Malia-Jamnagar-Okha-Porbandar-Veraval State Highway is under consideration;

(b) if so, what would be the estimated cost; and

(c) by when the upgradation would be completed?

Conversion of State highways into National Highways

2689. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any proposals under Government's consideration for conversion of State highways into National Highways which were forwarded by Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of National Highways of this State which are proposed to be converted into express highways during the next three years?

Problems impeding NHDP

2690. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Highway Development Programme inaugurated a few years back to provide connectivity to various parts of the country is progressing as per schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the project is likely to be completed and made operational;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken for addressing the problems impeding the project's timely completion?

Monitoring of projects by Prime Minister

2691. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Prime Minister has decided to monitor projects such as Golden Quadrilateral and North-South, East-West Corridor Projects to improve performance of the ongoing works;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a decision has, recently, been taken to this effect in the Union Cabinet; and

(c) what are the other projects that are personally monitored by the Prime Minister?

Steps to develop and boost SSI

2692. PROF. M. SANKARA-LINGAM: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to develop and boost the SSIs during the last four years;

(b) the number of persons employed in SSI during the said period; and

(c) the number of SSIs set up in the country during the last four years, State-wise?

Sick SSIs in Chhattisgarh

2693. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Small Scale Industries in Chhattisgarh;

(b) the number out of these that have been declared sick;

(c) the number of workers that were employed in these units;

(d) the number of workers that have been rendered unemployed due to sickness/lockout of these units; and

(e) the amount of revenue loss per year for the last three years due to these Small Scale Industries being declared sick?

Mission to moon

2694. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether ISRO has planned a mission around the orbit of Moon by the year 2007;

(b) whether certain foreign countries have evinced interest to join this mission, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the areas where the space research is being focussed; and

(d) whether the country possess a launch vehicle capability for the purpose?

Unmanned spaceship to moon

2695. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to launch an unmanned spaceship to moon;

(b) if so, the purpose and the cost involved in this venture; and

(c) what is the urgency for such a venture when a lot of developmental activities are held up for want of funds and what public interest and removal of poverty are going to be served by such a venture?

Launch of PSLV

2696. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) by when the PSLV (C-5) is likely to be launched;

(b) whether the burning of cables near the launch pad in a fire is likely to affect the launching; and

(c) what are the details in this regard?

Delay in implementation of projects

2697. DR. A. R. KIDWAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether delay in implementation of various projects of twelve Ministries has resulted in cost overrun totalling to over Rs. 15,155 crores;

(b) if so, which are the Ministries that have been delaying these projects;

(c) the main reasons for the same;

(d) to what extent the cost escalation has been made in these Ministry projects; and

(e) what action Government propose to take against these Ministries where this cost over run projects has been increasing?

NEW DELHI;
The 8th August, 2003
Sravana 17, 1925 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

I N D E X**(Ministry-wise)**

Prime Minister	: 2543,
Agro and Rural Industries	: 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551,
Atomic Energy	: 2552, 2553, 2554,
Communications and Information Technology	: 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599,
Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	: 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620,
Development of North Eastern Region	: 2621,
Disinvestment	: 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625,
External Affairs	: 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654,
Labour	: 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675,
Planning	: 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 2681,
Road Transport and Highway	: 2682, 2683, 2684, 2685, 2686, 2687, 2688, 2689, 2690, 2691,
Small Scale Industries	: 2692, 2693,
Space	: 2694, 2695, 2696,
Statistics and Programme Implementation	: 2697.

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the August 14, 2003/Sravana 23, 1925 (Saka)*

(Ministries : Prime Minister; Agro and Rural Industries; Atomic Energy; Communications and Information Technology; Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; Development of North Eastern Region; Disinvestment; External Affairs; Labour; Planning; Road Transport and Highways; Small Scale Industries; Space; Statistics and Programme Implementation)

Total number of questions—155

Tackling of economic crimes by CBI

2543. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
DR. M.N. DAS:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the CBI has set up Economic Intelligence Wing to tackle the growing menace of economic crimes in India;

(b) whether this wing represents Senior Officials of the Reserve Bank of India, some CBI officers of the Dy. Inspector General rank in probing Economic Offences in the country;

(c) if so, what would be the main task, power and functions of this wing;

(d) to what extent it would help to check the economic offenders; and

(e) whether any report would be submitted to Government from time to time?

Condition of ARIs in Karnataka

2544. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN:
DR. VIJAY MALLYA:

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of

the fact that the condition of traditional rural and cottage industries has been deteriorating and are on the verge of closure especially in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve their condition and the extent to which Government have succeeded in improving the situation?

Reduction in interest rate of loan

2545. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to reduce the interest rate on loans given for starting agro and rural industries and whether appropriate authorities would be recommended suitably in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Funds allocated for PMRY in U.P.

†2546. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any funds have been

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

allocated to Uttar Pradesh under the Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana in the year 2002-03; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Disbursement under PMRY in Andhra Pradesh

2547. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge gap in bank-wise number of persons recommended and actual disbursement made by the banks under the PMRY in the State of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years, year-wise and bank-wise;

(c) the reasons for such huge gaps; and

(d) the remedial measures being taken by Government in this regard?

Promotion of KVIC

†2548. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are keeping in view the factors like modern technique and modern fashion for promoting Khadi and Village Industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Modernisation of Khadi textiles

2549. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken to improve and modernise Khadi Textiles for better acceptability and popularity;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government have signed an MoU with the Textiles Committee to make available laboratories for quality testing and certification of khadi products; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Expansion of oil production industries

†2550. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been formulated by Government for the development and expansion of the oil production industry at the rural level by crushing the oilseeds produced in the country;

(b) if so, the outline of the scheme and the assessment made by Government regarding the number of people who earn at present their livelihood through this industry throughout the country;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Multinational Companies have already entered in this industry; and

(d) if so, the names of such MNCs?

Setting up of rural industries

2551. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to set up door-to-door industries in the rural areas of the country on the pattern of Japan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government to industrialise the villages?

CBI inquiry on misuse of Modular laboratories

2552. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government had ordered a CBI inquiry to investigate the misuse of Modular laboratory No. 3-319-S, Trombay, Mumbai during the year 2000;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the CBI has since submitted the report;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action taken by Government thereon?

Misuse of BARC laboratories

2553. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether instances of gross misuse of BARC's laboratories in the recent past by Government authorities for unofficial purposes, have come to Government's notice;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken thereon?

Installation of Nuclear Power Plants

2554. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Nuclear Power Corporation of India has surveyed

the sites for the location of nuclear power plants for electricity generation in power deficient States;

- (b) if so, the sites identified and how much power generation is being targeted;
- (c) whether any site for the State of Madhya Pradesh has been identified;
- (d) whether any time schedule has been finalised for the installation and commissioning of these plants; and
- (e) whether Government have made any scheme for providing power to different States?

Branch Post Offices in Himachal Pradesh

†2555. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether criteria for opening sub post offices are relaxed in remote, hilly and bordering States like Himachal Pradesh;
- (b) if so, the details of conditions which are being relaxed;
- (c) the number of sub post offices proposed to be opened and upgraded in Himachal Pradesh during the Tenth Five Year Plan; and
- (d) the efforts being made to achieve the target and the action plan thereof?

Broadband services on commercial line

2556. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have a

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

proposal to introduce broadband services on commercial lines;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) in that regard; and

(c) the cities in which broadband services would be introduced in the first instance?

Post offices in J&K

2557. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices working in Jammu and Kashmir, district-wise;

(b) whether Government propose to increase and upgrade the existing post offices;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the criteria adopted for upgradation of the post offices?

Mobile rates of MTNL and private companies

†2558. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mobile rates of MTNL are at par with the mobile rates of other private companies;

(b) the position with regard to the use of MTNL service in comparison to other private companies; and

(c) the details thereof?

Increase in cellular phone users

2559. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of cellular phone users is growing in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

Village public telephones

2560. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of village public telephones installed in the country upto the March, 2003, State-wise;

(b) whether a very high proportion of the installed VPTs remain non-functional;

(c) if so, percentage thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to run these VPTs satisfactorily?

Exemption of officers from liability

2561. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether section 6 and 43 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1893 stipulates exemption to officers from liability of loss, delay, misdelivery and damage;

(b) whether this exemption is obsolete and if not, why the officers are not charged with dereliction of duty and deficiency; and

(c) whether Government propose to amend such obnoxious sections which creates hurdles in the efficient administration of the Department and if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Closure of M.I.T.

2562. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to close the operations of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and is likely to be replaced by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) for various research projects;

(b) if so, what are the details of termination of MIT in India;

(c) how many research projects were there in hand of MIT at the time of termination of their contract; and

(d) whether MIT was studying low cost rural communication system, word computer, tomorrow's tools and digital village, and if so, what would be the fate of these projects after the termination of their services?

Capacity of telephone exchange

†2563. SHRI VEER SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the capacity of the telephone exchange of Sector 19, NOIDA, district Gautambudh Nagar;

(b) the capacity of the OCB and E-10-B telephone exchanges of Sector 18, NOIDA;

(c) the reasons for recovering charges of the bill at different rates from Sector 19 exchange at NOIDA to Network Exchanges;

(d) the details of the charging rentals on the basis of exchange capacity of NOIDA

exchange by keeping telephone exchanges under Ghaziabad, Sikandarabad and Khurja SDCA;

(e) the name of exchanges which have been kept under Ghaziabad, Sikandarabad and Khurja (SDCA) and the reasons therefor; and

(f) the details of the call pulse rates prescribed on residential phones, distance-wise?

Retirement benefits to employees

†2564. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. is offering pension and gratuity on the pay scales of IDA/CDA to the employees retired since October, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the retirement benefit to employees/officers would be paid by Government or by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd.; and

(c) the detailed outlines of retirement benefit?

VRS in BSNL/MTNL

†2565. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to introduce VRS for employees and officers working in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, this scheme is likely to be introduced and the outlines thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Garuda Mobile Service

2566. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether with the increase in subscribers for Garuda Mobile Service the Department is facing problem in providing connectivity to new subscribers;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the imports made by MTNL during the last three years for providing mobile service including name of the countries and companies;

(d) whether all the imported equipments are being put in use; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

WLL technology in the country

2567. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated strategy to introduce WLL Technology in rural and semi-urban areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government have initiated any action against the basic telephone operators for not fulfilling their commitments in providing service in rural areas;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Technology for telephone facilities in rural areas

†2568. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified the technology for setting up of telephone facilities in rural areas keeping in view the geographical and social conditions of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof so that the operation of telephone facilities could be made smooth and cost effective; and

(c) the various kinds of technologies utilised for setting up of telephone facilities in the rural areas of the country, so far?

Allotment of telephone connections in H.P.

2569. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone connections have been allotted during the year 2001—03 in the villages and P.O. Sansai of District Kangra of Himachal Pradesh and how many registrants are in waiting list and the number of persons that have applied for fresh telephone connections;

(b) whether it is a fact that a number of persons from village and P.O. Sansai have applied for the connections during the last year but they are not getting telephone connections; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the reasons for non-installation of connections and by when, registrants would get fresh connections?

FDI sectoral cap in telecom

2570. DR. M. N. DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether following objections raised by the security agencies to increase the FDI sectoral cap in telecom, the Department of Telecommunications has recommended an alternative route of placing FII investments outside the existing sectoral cap subject to an overall cap of 74 per cent;

(b) if so, whether the proposal of 'Universal licence' regime that is to replace the present system of separate licenses for basic, cellular and long-distance operations has also been considered;

(c) if so, to what extent these decisions have been approved and finalised; and

(d) the steps being taken to implement them?

Sale of Personal Computers

2571. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sale of Personal Computers is on the rise in the country;

(b) if so, the number of Personal Computers sold during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is corresponding increase in E-scrap, which is a health hazard;

(d) if so, whether Government propose to issue guidelines on the safe disposal of computer waste; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Branch post office at Nandla, Himachal Pradesh

†2572. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open branch post office in village Nandla, in Shimla of Himachal Pradesh, during the year 2003-04;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Telephone connections in Himachal Pradesh

2573. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of waiting list of telephone connections registered during the period from the 1st January, 2000 to the 30th June, 2003 in the Sub-Division Office (T), Rehan and Dehra in District Kangra, Himachal Pradesh;

(b) the present status thereof; and

(c) by when, this waiting list would be cleared?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Mobile phone users

†2574. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mobile phone users in the rural and urban areas of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the number of users likely to be increased during the current financial year; and

(c) the reasons for increase in the number of mobile phone users and decrease in the demand of basic (Land line) telephones?

Loss of registered letters

2575. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of registered letters lost by the Postal Department during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the amount of compensation paid for the loss of registered letters;

(c) whether Government have enquired into the reasons for loss of such registered letters sent in India and abroad, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken by Government to prevent the loss of registered articles by the Postal Department?

Shifting of postal life insurance to Jharkhand

†2576. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it takes months for the Department of Posts (Jaipur Circle) in transferring "Postal Life Insurance" to Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details along with the names of the persons whose request have been received for transfer of "Postal Life Insurance" to Jharkhand from Jaipur Circle during the last six months;

(c) whether all these have been transferred; and

(d) if not, by when, these would be transferred?

Development of Indian Language Technology

2577. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of programmes undertaken by Government for the development of Indian Language Technology;

(b) the allocation made for the purpose to these programmes during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the outcome of the programmes?

Decrease in BSNL/MTNL land line market

2578. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the losing grip on the Indian market by the country's major landline operators, both BSNL and MTNL during the last two years;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve the situation; and

(c) the details of the competitive approach adopted by the BSNL and the MTNL in relation to the private operators who have been reducing their tariff rates continuously?

Telephone exchange/line in Pauri Garhwal

†2579. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the people of Tarpalisaintha Patti Dhajulie of the district of Pauri Garhwal, Uttaranchal are demanding for opening of telephone exchange and laying of telephone line in Tarpalisaintha for many years;

(b) if so, by when, this facility would be provided; and

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

Mobile telephone facility in Uttaranchal

†2580. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the districts in the State of Uttaranchal where mobile telephone facility is available;

(b) the percentage of the total area in the State which is availing the above-mentioned facility;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that in most cities of the State

connected with mobile services, mobile sets do not work; and

(d) if so, the details of the measures proposed to be taken to improve the standard of mobile telephone services in the State?

Printing of telephone directory

†2581. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are certain fixed standards for inviting tenders for printing of the telephone directory;

(b) if so, whether the experience certificate of the tenderer is sufficient in this regard;

(c) if so, whether Government are aware of the fact that in the Meerut region of the Sanchar Nigam added their own conditions in the tender to benefit a particular tenderer; and

(d) if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard?

Loss to MTNL

2582. SHRI B. J. PANDA: MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MTNL has suffered 48 per cent dip in its net profit for the year ended on the 31st March, 2003;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to control the loss;

(c) whether it is also a fact that despite this decline in net profit, the Company has

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

recommended tax free 45 per cent dividend;
and

(d) whether the Company has a dip in their subscribers base, if so, the action plan to arrest this?

Mobile telephone to postmen

2583. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a scheme to provide WLL facilities to 8000 villages devoid of telecom facilities through 1800 rural postmen carrying WLL mobile phones;

(b) whether these postmen are to be paid commission from the earnings of the rural mobile phone facility, if so, the details of the scheme, indicating the cost involved therein; and

(c) the steps, so far, taken to implement the scheme?

Replacement of telephone exchanges in Andhra Pradesh

2584. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans for the replacement of all analogue telephone exchanges in Andhra Pradesh by digital electronic exchanges within a time frame; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Cellular Services in Guwahati by Reliance

2585. SHRI INDRAMONI BORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the cellular phone services provided by the sole provider the Reliance, at Guwahati has not been running smoothly to the dismay of the subscribers;

(b) whether any steps are being taken by Government for improvement of the services; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Postmen with telephone

2586. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to cover an additional 8,000 villages across the country under the scheme of village postman offering telephone services;

(b) if so, whether the project taken by BSNL, in co-ordination with the Department of Posts on a pilot basis in 8,000 villages since December last, was a success;

(c) if so, the total villages that would be covered under this scheme in the year 2003-04;

(d) whether private sector has not been able to make their commitment on rural telephony; and

(e) if so, the punishment that has been given to them for not honouring their commitment?

Rural and urban telephone subscribers

†2587. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge gap in the number of telephone subscribers of rural and urban areas of the country;

(b) if so, the respective number of telephone subscribers in urban and rural areas of the country, till March 2003; and

(c) what additional steps Government have taken, so far, to increase the number of telephone subscribers in rural areas?

Video conferencing facility

†2588. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal to connect the famous Badrinath and Kedarnath Temples by video conferencing facility at the earliest;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, the said facility would be started?

Poor postal services

2589. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI JHUMUK LAL
BHENDIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many post offices are located in main districts in parts of rural India and that the postal services are poor in far flung villages in certain districts;

(b) if so, the States in which post offices are situated only in districts;

(c) whether Government have plans to provide post offices in all Gram Panchayats of the States;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Single operating licence

2590. SHRI C. RAMACHAND-
RAIAH:
SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that TRAI wants to bring all segments of the telecom market under a single operating licence covering fixed, mobile, domestic, long distance and international calls;

(b) whether it is also a fact that TRAI wish to have uniform rules for all players;

(c) whether Government are thinking of scrapping regional fragmentation;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) how it helps the end-consumer?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Tele-density

2591. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise tele-density (per 100 person) particularly in the States of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in the years 1991-92 and 1999-2000;

(b) whether tele-density has been very low for Madhya Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Landline connections

2592. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total land-line connections both in rural and urban areas separately at the end of the year 2002-03;

(b) the number of cellular subscribers in the country separately for rural and urban areas;

(c) what is the combined tele-density for rural and urban areas;

(d) the targets regarding tele-density set for the years 2005 and 2010; and

(e) how these targets are proposed to be achieved?

Community Information Centres in Tripura

2593. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of blocks in Tripura where Community Information Centres (CICs) have been set up;

(b) the number of blocks in the State where CIC projects are due to be set up; and

(c) the benefits derived/to be derived from these CICs?

STPI at Agartala

2594. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a decision has been taken to set up Software Technology Parks at Agartala;

(b) whether it is also a fact that STPI and State Government of Tripura have already come to an understanding in respect of the said Parks; and

(c) the progress made in the matter?

Benefit to private operators

2595. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private operators have been given undue benefit to the tune of Rs. 719 crore in relation with the Village Public Telephone System, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Department spent more than 90 crore rupees to provide VPTs on behalf of private operators; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Industrial units under IT

†2596. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of industrial units under Information Technology Industry has increased during the year 2002-03 in the country;

(b) if so, the number thereof in comparison to the year 2001-02 alongwith the number of these industrial units during the year 2002-03; and

(c) the names of the 20 such units out of these functional industrial units which have performed maximum business and the extent of business performed by them during the year 2002-03?

Investment by MTNL

2597. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mahanagar Telecom Nigam Limited has decided to invest Rs. 1,200 crore in 2003-04 for developing telecom backbone and infrastructure, including CDMA network;

(b) if so, what are the main projects that would be undertaken;

(c) whether the work on these projects have started; and

(d) if so, whether the MTNL also plans to expand its GSM and CDMA mobiles in the two Metros of which Mumbai would get an additional four lakh lines of both services?

Expansion of MTNL network

2598. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have asked MTNL to explore opportunities that would enable to company to expand its network and improve its financial condition; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by MTNL to achieve their objectives?

Increase in service tax for prepaid card

2599. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in service tax for prepaid card by private cell phone operators;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether hikes in service tax by private cell operators are in accordance with TRAI; and

(d) if so, the details of hike in service tax in the last three years?

Food subsidy to FCI

2600. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of food subsidy given by Government during the last two years, year-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) in what manner the subsidy has been utilised by the Food Corporation of India; and

(c) the amount of foodgrains lost in transit during the period?

Creation of Sugar buffer stock

2601. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to create a buffer stock of sugar;

(b) if so, the quantity of sugar in the proposed stock of sugar; and

(c) the estimate of sugar production in this years' ending *i.e.* September, 2003 and what was the sugar production last year?

Funds for godowns and cold storages

†2602. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of godowns and cold storages for suitable storage of foodgrains, State-wise;

(b) the amount of funds released by Government during the last three years for repair of old and dilapidated godowns and construction of new ones, State-wise; and

(c) if so, the number of States which have so far submitted the report on the utilisation of the said funds to the Centre?

Problems of sugarcane growers

2603. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any formula has been evolved to help the sugarcane growers out of the crisis faced by them; and

(b) the number of sugarcane growers suffering alongwith the latest figures of accumulated arrears of cane dues and other parameters of the crisis?

Sale of commodities in hotels at M.R.P.

2604. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Star category hotels and other fast food joints are not charging the customers according to Consumer Affairs Packaged Commodities Rules, 1997 on various items like cold drinks and drinking water;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what action Government have proposed against the owners of these hotels/fast food joints;

(d) whether it is also a fact that according to the above rules, all the items sold at the hotels are sold at printed Maximum Retail Price (MRP); and

(e) if so, how many five star hotels are not selling these commodities at MRP and the action taken against them by Government?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Recommendations made by "High Level Committee on long-term grain policy"

2605. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the status report of implementation by Government as on date, with regard to various recommendations and proposals as made through a report by the "High level Committee on long-term grain policy", July 2002; and

(b) what remedial measures are being taken by Government towards greater production and proper security of Food Distribution in view of the report having shown at all India level, much decrease in food production, area of cultivation and yield per hectare from 1999 which is a warning signal for a rapid negative growth of production?

District Consumer Protection Councils

2606. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of District Consumer Protection Councils set up, so far, in Andhra Pradesh under Consumer Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002;

(b) the number of cases decided by these Councils, District-wise;

(c) the time likely to be taken in setting up these Council in all the districts of Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) the details of the objectives of these Councils?

Stolen foodgrains from FCI

†2607. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of foodgrains that had been stolen from the godowns and stores of the Food Corporation of India during the last three years;

(b) whether Government have investigated all the cases;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the officers found responsible for the theft?

Sale of foodgrains through PDS

†2608. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sale of foodgrains through Public Distribution System has been reducing continuously for the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to boost the sale through Public Distribution System?

Memorandum on PDS

2609. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any memorandum from All India Fair Price Shop Dealers Federation Delhi, regarding Public Distribution System;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof;
and

(c) what action Government have taken
thereon?

Foodgrains for ration card holders

2610. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of persons below poverty line in the country at present;

(b) what is the number of ration cards issued to them in order to enable them to purchase foodgrains at low rates; and

(c) what is the quantity of foodgrains to which a person below poverty line is entitled per month?

Sale of food grains at higher prices

†2611. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the matter of taking more money from consumers due to non-availability of stock of foodgrains in shops has been revealed during raids on two dozen ration shops in Delhi;

(b) if so, the action taken against these shopkeepers and whether any stern action is proposed to be taken regarding cancellation of these shopkeepers' licences; and

(c) the details thereof?

Study of issues concerning consumer protection

2612. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have mooted a proposal to set up six working groups to study various issues related to consumer protection and suggest measures for dealing with them effectively;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the consumer clubs would be set up in schools to create awareness about consumer rights; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Outstanding amount of sugarcane growers

†2613. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether outstanding amount of sugarcane growers has been assessed by Government;

(b) if so, the total outstanding amount during June, 2003;

(c) whether Government have decided to allocate Rs. 600 crores for paying the outstanding amount; and

(d) if so, allocation made to the farmers out of the above amount, State-wise and amount-wise?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Financial package for sugarcane farmers

†2614. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

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

(a) whether Government have sanctioned Rs. 600 crores from the Sugar Development Fund for the four Sugarcane growing States, namely, Punjab, Haryana, U.P. and Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, whether this is done to assist the sugarcane farmers who were not paid as per the State Advisory Prices (SAP) especially in Maharashtra; and

(c) if so, Government's stand with regard to providing assistance from the said fund to Maharashtra?

Purchase and storage of wheat by FCI

2615. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of wheat purchased by Food Corporation of India and other State agencies during the period April to June, 2003, State-wise and agency-wise;

(b) the stock of wheat with the Food Corporation of India as on 30th June, 2003; and

(c) the steps being taken by Food Corporation of India to reduce its transit and storage losses which are quite high as compared to those of such agencies in developed countries?

Hike in prices of essential commodities

2616. SHRI R. K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA:

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

(a) whether Government are aware of hike in prices of essential commodities every year and the reasons advanced therefor, like, floods, monsoons and drought, these being natural events happening every year;

(b) whether Government feel its responsibility to overcome such problems beforehand and ensure that there are no price hikes because of these factors; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

Finalisation of accounts by FCI

2617. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India has not finalised its accounts for the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action proposed against those responsible for irregularities?

Beneficiaries of Annapurna Scheme in Orissa

2618. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of beneficiaries of 60 years and above, identified so far under 'Annapurna Scheme' in Orissa;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the total quantity of foodgrains allotted and distributed so far under the scheme in Orissa; and

(c) the fresh steps taken by Government to widen the scope of the scheme in order to cover more people living below poverty line in Orissa?

Extension of Antyodaya Scheme in Karnataka

2619. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked the State Government of Karnataka to extend Antyodaya Scheme to two lakh families in Karnataka;

(b) if so, how many families in Karnataka have been benefited so far from the above scheme;

(c) the quantity of free foodgrains supplied to Karnataka per month for the above scheme; and

(d) whether the Karnataka Government has sent the list of additional beneficiaries of the scheme?

PDS in tribal, hilly and remote areas

2620. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures being taken by Government for strengthening Public Distribution System in the country particularly in tribal, hilly and remote areas; and

(b) the role being played by State

Government to provide the quantity of food-grains to the poor people in the country?

Schemes for NER

†2621. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes declared by the Prime Minister in the Conference of the Chief Ministers of the North-Eastern Region held in January, 2000;

(b) the schemes that have been implemented so far;

(c) by when the remaining schemes would be implemented; and

(d) the reasons for the delay?

Disinvestment of HPCL and BPCL

2622. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Oil Corporation, BPCL and HPCL have doubled their profits in the year 2002-03 in comparison to 2001-02;

(b) if so, whether Government would agree to stop disinvestment process of these companies; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Privatisation of Maruti Udyog Limited

2623. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large chunk of equity in Maruti Udyog Limited (MUL) was lately

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

offered for public subscription and was over-subscribed;

(b) the reasons for privatisation of the only public sector automobile company and how far it was over-subscribed and at what rate on average the shares were sold;

(c) the profits earned by MUL during the last five years; and

(d) whether it paved the way for privatisation of some other profit earning public sector undertakings, if so, the details in this regard?

Profot making PSUs

2624. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether additional investments pumped into the 240 Central Public Sector Enterprises in the year 2001-02 and the PSUs registered 66 per cent profit;

(b) if so, the PSUs which have earned profit;

(c) how many are still running under loss; and

(d) whether in view of the successful implementation, the Government have decided not to disinvest them?

Disinvestment of PSUs

2625. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the disinvestment proposals;

(b) the PSU's slotted for disinvestment during the current financial year and the progress being made; and

(c) the target fixed during the last financial year and the achievements made?

Promotion of economic and commercial cooperation by Missions

2626. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps, if any, Government have taken in the last three years to reinforce the capacity and ability of Indian Missions abroad to undertake effective initiatives for promoting close economic and commercial co-operation with various countries; and

(b) in what manner Government propose to be pro-active in promoting National Economic interests particularly in the EU and in South-East Asia?

Terrorism as core issue between India and Pakistan

2627. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government agrees that terrorism, and not Kashmir, is the core issue between India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether Deputy Prime Minister had told USA that India is not asking Pakistan to abandon their views on Kashmir but change their views on terrorism during his visit in June, 2003 to USA;

(c) whether the nefarious and totally unacceptable activities of Pakistan's ISI were pointed out to the US also; and

(d) if so, the response thereto?

Suspension of Pakistan from Commonwealth

2628. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that

Pakistan is to remain suspended from Commonwealth; and

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

Anchoring of American Warships at Kochi

2629. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that American warships returning from Iraq were permitted entry into Kochi Port;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the duration of their stay at Kochi;

(c) whether permitting this ship at Kochi was against the spirit of the country's stand on the Iraq war; and

(d) Government's response thereto?

Military sale to Pakistan by Germany

2630. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Germany had lifted its ban on military sales to Pakistan; and

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

Civil war in African countries

†2631. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several African countries like Liberia and Congo, etc. are engaged in a fierce civil war;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that 33 lakhs people have died in Congo alone and Liberia is still bearing the brunt;

(c) if so, whether it is a fact that India being a leader of Non-Alligned Movement has failed to play its role in solving those problems; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Visit of Pakistani delegation

2632. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a recent Pakistani delegation, the largest ever business delegation, has *inter alia* urged to ease visa norms on the plea that such a policy would flourish the trade between the two countries;

(b) if so, what are their main demands;

(c) Governments' reaction thereon; and

(d) whether Pakistan Government is also expected to reciprocate our gesture?

"Oil for food" scheme

†2633. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering Iraq for "Oil for food" programme sponsored by the U.N.O.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far?

Indo-South Africa Co-operation

2634. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether talks were held recently

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

between India and South Africa for strengthening bilateral economic co-operation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of agreements signed between the two countries?

Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group meeting

2635. MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group meeting was held in last May in London; and

(b) if so, the decisions taken therein, especially to combat cross-border terrorism?

Government's role in Sri Lankan peace process

2636. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a senior Sri Lankan Tamil Leader has appealed to India to exert pressure on the International Community for democratizing the on-going peace process in the Island by including other Tamil groups instead of talking only to the LTTE, indirectly requesting India to get involved in the peace process; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the policy of our Government?

Tamil interpreters in Gulf countries

2637. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of problems faced by labourers going to Gulf countries from Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to appoint Tamil interpreters in Gulf embassies considering heavy concentration of labourers from the State;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Schools for children of diplomats

2638. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the countries in which Indian schools are being run for children of our diplomats abroad;

(b) the children of how many diplomats are studying in schools/universities abroad and in which countries; and

(c) the details of financial assistance/allowances being given to diplomats for this purpose?

US efforts to stop cross border terrorism in India

2639. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US President took up the issue of cross border terrorism with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf during June, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government are satisfied with the outcome of the USA efforts and optimistic of positive response from Pakistan?

Prime Minister's visit

2640. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Prime Minister met Heads of Germany, China and Russia during his visit abroad during May-June this year;

(b) if so, the details of the subject matters discussed and their response thereto; and

(c) what has been their stand on the cross border terrorism by Pakistan and the Kashmir issue?

Rehabilitation work in Iraq by Indian companies

2641. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian companies have received signals from Iraq for its post war development and rehabilitation;

(b) the names of Government and private Companies which have been doing work in the past in Iraq; and

(c) the details in this regard?

Visit of Israeli Prime Minister

2642. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the issues proposed to be discussed with the Prime Minister of Israel during his ensuing visit in September, 2003?

Indian nationals stranded in Tripoli

2643. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently 73 village youths from Pubjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, who got stranded in Tripoli, the capital of Libya, were lured for jobs by M/s Glomat Overseas Associates;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to check it?

Deputy Prime Minister's USA visit

†2644. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the issues discussed and agreements reached during the recent visit of Deputy Prime Minister to USA;

(b) whether any discussion took place on issues like Iraq and Pakistan; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Indo-Australian co-operation

2645. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Australia is exploring areas and issues for closer co-operation with India;

(b) if so, whether both India and Australia are seen as important components of stability in the Asia-Pacific region; and

(c) if so, what are the main issues on which both India and Australia have agreed to have a closer co-operation?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Pakistani national as Visa Officer in British High Commission

2646. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the British High Commission in New Delhi has appointed a former Pakistani National as a Visa Officer in High Commission's office;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Government's reaction thereto and whether Government have conveyed its feelings to the British Government on the proposed appointment; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Increase in staff strength in Indian and Pakistani High Commissions

2647. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the resumption of diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan, the staff strength in the two High Commissions is proposed to be brought to the original level;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) by when the resumption of trade between the two countries and the issuing of visas for tourists is likely to begin?

Death of Indian officers

†2648. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of officials working in the Ministry of External Affairs who had died in harness while posted abroad;

(b) whether Government have provided

jobs to the dependents of the deceased on compassionate grounds;

(c) if so, the number of such dependents who have been provided jobs on compassionate grounds;

(d) the number of applications for compassionate grounds pending for the approval of Government; and

(e) whether Government holds positive views on such applications?

POK Prime Minister's statement regarding Indo-Pak talks

2649. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have come across statement made by the POK Prime Minister that the armed struggle would intensify if Kashmiris were ignored during the parleys between India and Pakistan; and

(b) if so, whether Government conveyed any reaction to Pakistan on such remarks?

Extremist activities from Nepal

2650. DR. A.R. KIDWAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Nepal had become haven for criminals and a number of extremists activities are operating in Nepal;

(b) if so, whether India and Nepal have signed an agreement to share criminal intelligence through diplomatic channels;

(c) if so, to what extent this has helped both the countries to check the criminal menace operating for long in India and Nepal; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) the further steps being taken to improve the situation of controlling the criminal activities in both the countries?

Perks to lower staff in Indian missions

2651. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA:

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether CAG has indicted the Ministry for bonus and other perks being given to the lower staff in various Indian Missions abroad, especially in Europe;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for extra privileges to them and remedial measures proposed to be taken to rectify the irregularities?

Implementation of Land Boundary Agreement between India and Bangladesh

2652. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether two joint Boundary Groups have been set up by the Governments of India and Bangladesh to resolve all pending issues relating to the implementation of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement between both the countries; and

(b) if so, the progress made so far?

Indian peace keeping forces

†2653. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian peace keeping forces have been sent to several countries under the aegis of United Nations Organisation in the past;

(b) if so, the number of soldiers sent alongwith the name of countries and the dates when these soldiers were sent by India;

(c) whether it is also a fact that several Indian soldiers have been killed during the peace keeping missions; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Indo-China joint working group

†2654. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a joint working group was constituted in the year 1998 to resolve the disputes between India and China;

(b) if so, the number of meetings held so far of the said group;

(c) the details of various disputes discussed in these meetings; and

(d) whether any of them has been sorted out, so far?

Functioning of P.F. Commissioner

2655. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Provident Fund Commissioner's office in Varanasi deprives pensions to the widows of its own employees;

(b) if so, the steps Government are taking to bring to book such acts of negligence and callousness;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether any action has been initiated against the culprits who are delaying payments of pensions on such a manner all over the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Workers interest in BALCO and Modern Foods

2656. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Committee tasked by Prime Minister to look into the disinvestment of BALCO and Modern Foods has found that the interests of the workers have been overlooked by Sterlite and Hindustan Lever; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Employees Pension Scheme

2657. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any applications of the retired factory workers in Kerala, who exercised the option under Employees Pension Scheme-95, are pending for the payment;

(b) whether the High Court of Kerala passed any direction to admit their claims and grant them pension;

(c) the stage at which the grant of EPF pension to those persons stands at present; and

(d) whether the State Government of Kerala considers to initiate any steps to grant them pension through the Regional Commissioner for EPF Thiruvanthapuram?

I.L.O's help for poverty alleviation

2658. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country has sought the help of the International Labour Organisation in rooting out poverty;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the ILO's response to the request?

Progress regarding eradication of child labour

†2659. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have written any letter to the Chief Ministers of such States where the child labour is prevalent emphasizing the need of holding regular discussion to monitor the constant progress with regard to abolition of the child labour;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the State Governments' reaction in this regard and the steps taken/proposed to be taken to eradicate this social evil;

(d) whether Government have received any relevant programme from the State Governments in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when, child labour is likely to be eradicated from the country?

Funds for Child Labour

2660. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a 13-year old Supreme Court's directive for setting up a

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

fund for the children working in hazardous conditions, is yet to be implemented and they continue to lose their lives and limbs while seeking out livelihood by making matches, crackers etc.; and

(b) if so, why this indifferent attitude to future citizens of India especially when every child is entitled to safeguards and Fundamental Rights guaranteed under the Constitutions?

Unemployment problem in Assam

2661. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any comprehensive scheme for solving unemployment problem in the State of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of the opportunities created for educated unemployed youth through the establishment of various industries in the State during the last three years?

Educated unemployed youth

2662. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of educated unemployed youth registered with the employment exchanges in Assam, during the last three years; and

(b) the steps being taken by Government for solving the unemployment problem of the State?

International Labour Organisation

2663. SHRI A VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether India consistently abstained from ratifying the Convention (No. 87) on Freedom of Association and Protection of Right to Organise and the Convention (No. 98) on Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining of International Labour Organisation (ILO);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken to ratify the above conventions?

Training opportunities

2664. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to provide training opportunities to the poor at affordable costs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner the funding would be arranged for it?

Unorganised welfare fund

2665. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the funds that have been allocated to his Ministry under unorganised welfare fund during the last five years; year-wise;

(b) the utilisation of the said funds during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the beneficiaries under this fund in the last five years, year-wise and State-wise?

Job position in organised sector

2666. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the organised sector in India shed 4.2 lakh jobs in the year 2001-02 and whether it marked the fifth consecutive year when jobs in this sector fell;

(b) if so, the job position in March each year since March, 1997 including the year 2002-03; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the job position in organised sector?

Dharna by ESI Doctors

2667. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Doctors of the Employees State Insurance hospitals and dispensaries in the capital have recently staged a dharna at ESI Headquarter, New Delhi; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the demands submitted by them and the action taken thereon?

Creation of jobs for 40 millions

2668. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether an expert group of economists and industrialists has worked out a blue-print for 40 million jobs for the Indian workforce by the year 2020;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to create an appropriate environment in the country in order to equip the youth to respond to the challenging opportunities to be made available on the implementation of the proposed blue-print?

Safety and health of the workers

†2669. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Labour Institutes set up in the country are capable to cater to the needs of the safety and health of the workers; and

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

Unemployment ratio

†2670. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether unemployment ratio has shown a downward trend during the last five years;

(b) if so, the details of the existing number of educated unemployed persons and the year-wise number of the same during the last five years;

(c) the names of the States having maximum number of educated unemployed persons;

(d) whether Government have formulated any special scheme to combat

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

the problem of educated unemployment; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Contract labour laws

2671. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a labour law on the Welfare and rationalisation of contract labour;

(b) if so, what are the other salient features of the proposed legislation;

(c) whether Government are thinking of introducing this law during the current Session of Parliament; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Increase in women job aspirants

2672. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of women seeking jobs through the employment exchanges has increased over the years; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to provide more placements to women job seekers to encourage educated women?

Survey of bonded labourers

2673. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted a district-wise survey of bonded labourers, recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of bonded labourers rehabilitated alongwith rehabilitation assistance provided during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by Government for rehabilitation of bonded labourers especially in rural and remote areas of the country?

EPF cover to employees in Karnataka

2674. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees, so far, covered under the Employees Provident Fund in Karnataka;

(b) whether it has come to Government's notice that a large number of employees working in rice mills and other factories in Bellary and other Districts are not covered under the Provident Fund Act; and

(c) whether Government would conduct extensive survey and ensure that all employees in establishments with more than 25 employees are covered under the Act?

Status of women in new high tech economy

2675. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the new high tech economy is leaving women behind; and

(b) whether women are being encouraged to join better-paying, higher-status and faster-growing professions such as systems analysts, software designers, engineers etc.?

Special programme for KBK region

2676. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has sanctioned two special programmes for KBK zone in Orissa under Rashtriya Shram Vikas Yojana (RSVY);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the projects that would be taken up with this aid; and

(c) the details of 100 per cent centrally aided projects sanctioned for KBK to boost economy of this region?

Gloomy picture of Indian economy

2677. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank Development Policy Review's assessment has recently painted a gloom and doom picture of Indian economy;

(b) if so, the detail of their findings; and

(c) Government's reaction thereon?

Share of service sector in GDP

†2678. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that share of service sector in the Gross Domestic Product of the country has increased since the start of the decade of nineties till end;

(b) if so, the percentage of this contribution;

(c) whether it is also a fact that rate in employment opportunities in organised sector of the country has also increased;

(d) if so, the growth rate thereof; and

(e) what are the reasons for the difference between percentage of increase in gross domestic product *vis-a-vis* employment?

Financial package for Kerala

2679. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the competent authority has announced financial supports for Kerala in "Kumarakom Package" and financial aids in Global Investment Meet (GIM) within the last three years;

(b) if so, the details including the financial and other supports declared under "Kumarakom package" and Global Investment Meet and the actual support given as on today, category-wise;

(c) whether there is any delay in providing the above support; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Socio-economic reforms in Chhattisgarh

2680. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of any new socio-economic reforms which Government plan to introduce in Chhattisgarh especially for the backward regions;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government have received any proposals for the same; and

(c) if not, whether there has been any formal representations by any NGOs regarding the same?

Poverty ratio

2681. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what was the poverty ratio in 1993-94;

(b) what is the present poverty ratio; and

(c) what is the projection estimate by 2012?

Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989

2682. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) by when the draft notification dated 21st January, 2003 to amend the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 to clarify confusion related to application of IT to Transport Sector created by notification dated 31st May, 2002 would be issued;

(b) the reasons for the delay to release the draft notification;

(c) the steps being taken to implement the smart card based vehicle registration certificates in various States; and

(d) the details thereof?

Progress of six-lane highway project

†2683. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress in construction of six-lane express highways at present;

(b) the States where work of highways is yet to be completed; and

(c) whether the cost of construction is escalating?

Amount allocated under CRF

†2684. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the amount allocated from the Central Road Fund during the year 2003-04, State-wise; and

(b) the details of the schemes formulated and the amount allocated for maintenance of highways and construction work during the current year?

Golden Quadrilateral Project

2685. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that anticipated targets are not being achieved in the Golden Quadrilateral National Highway Development Project launched by Prime Minister in 1999, involving an estimated cost of Rs. 58,000 crores over ten years;

(b) if so, what are the annual targets, whether these were achieved during the financial years 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any effective monitoring mechanism exists for it; and

(e) if so, the periodicity thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Accidents on National Highways

2686. SHRISWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of highways in the country, during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) the number of road accidents on the highways, during the last five years, year-wise;

(c) the number of lives lost each year during the last five years; and

(d) the medical facilities available on the highways for people injured in accidents?

Highways in Karnataka

2687. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:
SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans to convert more State Highways into National Highways in the coming years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the expenditure incurred on the conversion of State Highways and their maintenance in the country especially in the Karnataka?

Upgradation of roads in Gujarat

2688. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Government's request for upgradation of roads of Malia-Jamnagar-Okha-Porbandar-Veraval State Highway is under consideration;

(b) if so, what would be the estimated cost; and

(c) by when the upgradation would be completed?

Conversion of State highways into National Highways

2689. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any proposals under Government's consideration for conversion of State highways into National Highways which were forwarded by Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of National Highways of this State which are proposed to be converted into express highways during the next three years?

Problems impeding NHDP

2690. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Highway Development Programme inaugurated a few years back to provide connectivity to various parts of the country is progressing as per schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the project is likely to be completed and made operational;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken for addressing the problems impeding the project's timely completion?

Monitoring of projects by Prime Minister

2691. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Prime Minister has decided to monitor projects such as Golden Quadrilateral and North-South, East-West Corridor Projects to improve performance of the ongoing works;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a decision has, recently, been taken to this effect in the Union Cabinet; and

(c) what are the other projects that are personally monitored by the Prime Minister?

Steps to develop and boost SSI

2692. PROF. M. SANKARA-LINGAM: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to develop and boost the SSIs during the last four years;

(b) the number of persons employed in SSI during the said period; and

(c) the number of SSIs set up in the country during the last four years, State-wise?

Sick SSIs in Chhattisgarh

2693. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Small Scale Industries in Chhattisgarh;

(b) the number out of these that have been declared sick;

(c) the number of workers that were employed in these units;

(d) the number of workers that have been rendered unemployed due to sickness/lockout of these units; and

(e) the amount of revenue loss per year for the last three years due to these Small Scale Industries being declared sick?

Mission to moon

2694. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether ISRO has planned a mission around the orbit of Moon by the year 2007;

(b) whether certain foreign countries have evinced interest to join this mission, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the areas where the space research is being focussed; and

(d) whether the country possess a launch vehicle capability for the purpose?

Unmanned spaceship to moon

2695. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to launch an unmanned spaceship to moon;

(b) if so, the purpose and the cost involved in this venture; and

(c) what is the urgency for such a venture when a lot of developmental activities are held up for want of funds and what public interest and removal of poverty are going to be served by such a venture?

Launch of PSLV

2696. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) by when the PSLV (C-5) is likely to be launched;

(b) whether the burning of cables near the launch pad in a fire is likely to affect the launching; and

(c) what are the details in this regard?

Delay in implementation of projects

2697. DR. A. R. KIDWAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether delay in implementation of various projects of twelve Ministries has resulted in cost overrun totalling to over Rs. 15,155 crores;

(b) if so, which are the Ministries that have been delaying these projects;

(c) the main reasons for the same;

(d) to what extent the cost escalation has been made in these Ministry projects; and

(e) what action Government propose to take against these Ministries where this cost over run projects has been increasing?

NEW DELHI;
The 8th August, 2003

Srivana 17, 1925 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

I N D E X**(Ministry-wise)**

Prime Minister	: 2543,
Agro and Rural Industries	: 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551,
Atomic Energy	: 2552, 2553, 2554,
Communications and Information Technology	: 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599,
Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	: 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620,
Development of North Eastern Region	: 2621,
Disinvestment	: 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625,
External Affairs	: 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654,
Labour	: 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675,
Planning	: 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 2681,
Road Transport and Highway	: 2682, 2683, 2684, 2685, 2686, 2687, 2688, 2689, 2690, 2691,
Small Scale Industries	: 2692, 2693,
Space	: 2694, 2695, 2696,
Statistics and Programme Implementation	: 2697.