

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on

Thursday, the May 16, 2002/Vaisakha 26, 1924 (Saka)

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

Total number of questions—155

Agro Export Zones

5246. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of AGRO
AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Agro Export Zones
set up in different parts of the country;
State-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal before
Government for setting up of more Agro
Export Zones; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

New Agro and Rural Industries Policy

5247. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will
the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL
INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to formulate a
new Agro and Rural Industries policy
considering the recent changes in the
economic liberalisation and globalisation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Development of cottage industries in Andhra Pradesh

5248. DR. DASARI NARAYANA
RAO: Will the Minister of AGRO AND
RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any action
plan or package for development of cottage
industries in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present status of the cottage
industries in the State?

Electricity generation from atomic technology

†5249. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will
the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has
been drawn towards the news-item captioned
"Achcchi Va Sasti Bijli Milegi Pramanu
Praudyogiki Se" published in the Rashtriya
Sahara dated the 25th March, 2002;

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) by when a final decision would be taken by Government with regard to the setting up of a atomic power plant; and

(d) the target of generating power therefrom?

MoU by Indian Rare Earths Ltd.

5250. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Rare Earths Ltd. (IREL), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a private company (Kerala Rare Earths Ltd.) to have a joint venture in mining and mineral separation of Beach sand mineral at Chavara, Kollam District;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the latest position of the said joint venture proposal?

Satellite imagery to Map and Prospect diamonds

5251. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether statellite imagery is being used to map and prospect diamonds in the country;

(b) if so, the States where work is being done;

(c) the companies which are engaged in this work; and

(d) the result of diamonds prospecting during the last three years?

Growth rate in mining sector

5252. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the growth rate in mining sector has been lower in April—February, 2001-02 as compared to the same months in the year 2000-01;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

Amendment to contract labour laws pertaining to coal mining sector

5253. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee on Integrated Coal Policy has suggested amendments to the Contract Labour Laws pertaining to coal mining sector;

(b) if so, whether the recommendations have been implemented/being implemented;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Committee to look into the affairs of CIL and BCCL

5254. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Committee was set up in 1993 to look into the affairs of Coal India Ltd. and BCCL, Dhanbad and other related issues of coal, its resources etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the major findings of the Committee;

(d) whether in 1994 Chairman, Coal India Ltd. was asked to take action on the findings of the Committee;

(e) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(f) the reasons for not taking any action against BCCL, Dhanbad and its officials as well?

Bogus industries availing Government benefits

5255. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bogus industries under the Ministry of Coal are illegally availing the benefits of the scheme launched by Government to encourage the industries and are getting coal at price less than the market price;

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

(c) the amount swindled off by these industries and the loss caused to the exchequer;

(d) whether some of these industries are indirectly run by the officials of the Coal India Limited, BCCL and CCL;

(e) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(f) if so, the findings thereof?

Irregularities and rampant corruption in BCCL

5256. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received several representations from MPs and other representatives of Jharkhand and Bihar drawing their attention towards the alleged irregularities and rampant corruption in BCCL, Dhanbad;

(b) if so, the nature of allegations, levelled in these representations, against BCCL, Dhanbad; and

(c) the action taken/proposed by Government thereon?

Corruption in Northern Coalfields Ltd., Singrauli

5257. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many officials are working for the last ten to fifteen years in a single project out of various projects of the Northern Coalfields Limited, Singrauli as a result of which corruption is rampant there;

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

(c) the details of Government's transfer policy; and

(d) by when, Government would transfer these officials to other projects who are engaged in the same project for more than five years?

Corruption in CIL

†5258. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the companies of the Coal India Limited which are incurring losses at present;

(b) whether it is a fact that corruption is the main factor responsible for the losses being incurred by these coal companies;

(c) if so, the number of cases of corruption which have come to light during the last three years and what is the number of persons/officers against whom legal action has been taken;

(d) whether Government propose to launch any special drive to do away with the corruption so that the coal companies could be freed from mafias; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

National level licensing and monitoring authority for IT enabled service industry

5259. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to appoint a single National level licensing and monitoring authority for the IT-enabled service industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received 15-point plan from the Confederation of Indian Industries;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) Government's reaction thereto?

Telephone exchanges in Andhra Pradesh

5260. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new telephone exchanges installed in Andhra Pradesh during the last three years;

(b) the details thereof, district-wise; and

(c) the telephone exchanges proposed to be installed during the year 2002-2003?

Pending complaints

5261. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints received in his Ministry with regard to ordinary mails,

registered mails, speed post, insured mail, money order, etc. during the last five years;

(b) whether it is a fact that a large number of complaints are still pending in the Department of Posts for redressal of grievances;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by his Ministry for prompt settlement of complaints?

Departmental examination for Postmen

5262. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a representation regarding irregularities in conducting the Departmental Examination for the post of Postmen held at Muzaffarnagar Division in 1998 has been received in his Ministry;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted so far; and

(c) if not, by when the matter would be enquired into and the guilty officers punished?

Earnings through speed post

5263. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the earnings through speed post during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) the earnings of private courier operators during the above period, year-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that courier industry is not properly regulated in the country *i.e.*,

there are many unauthorised courier companies in the country; and

(d) if so, the steps Government are taking to curb the unauthorised private courier companies in the country?

Electronic telephone exchanges in Rajasthan

5264. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to install electronic telephone exchanges in Rajasthan;

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

(c) the allocations made for the purpose for 2001-02?

STD/ISD/PCO booths in Rajasthan

5265. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that applications for STD/ISD/PCO booths in all the telecom circles of Rajasthan are pending with Government for the last two years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

Internet facilities in Rajasthan

5266. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the cities of Rajasthan where internet facilities have been provided during 2000-01 or proposed to be provided, district-wise; and

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

CII's ten point agenda for promotion of hot sites

5267. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has proposed a ten point agenda for promotion of hot sites in India by a consortium of call centre companies, based on the need and demand equation as per the DoT guidelines;

(b) whether these hot sites have been proposed with a view to keep the operations on even in the event of disasters like earthquakes, fire, bomb explosions etc.;

(c) whether Government have examined the proposal; and

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

Sankhya Vahini

5268. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided not to proceed further with the proposal for setting up "Sankhya Vahini"; and

(b) if so, the reasons which have contributed to dropping of this proposal?

Opening of telephone exchanges in villages of UP

5269. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the existing norms for opening of telephone exchange in a village;

(b) the number of telephone exchanges functioning in Uttar Pradesh at present and proposed to be set up during the current financial year, district-wise;

(c) the number of villages in the State where telephone facility is available at present or proposed to be provided;

(d) by when the said facility is likely to be provided in the remaining villages;

(e) whether there are inadequate telephone and telecommunications facilities in rural areas in the State; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

Development of branded products/ services in IT Sector

5270. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Advisory Committee on Information Technology has drawn up a strategy for the Indian software industry to develop branded products and services as well as specialise in consultancy;

(b) if so, what were the other major decisions taken in the meeting held in the month of May, 2001; and

(c) to what extent a final strategy in this regard has been agreed upon?

Investment by France Telecom

5271. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether France Telecom is keen on

increasing investment in India especially in the cellular telephone sector;

(b) if so, whether according to the spokesman of France Telecom, there is huge scope for growth in cellular telephony in India;

(c) if so, whether any agreement with France investment in telecom India has been signed;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) to what extent, the France Telecom has agreed to invest in this sector?

Setting up of common international gateway in India

5272. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has mooted a proposal to set up a common international gateway in India that could connect all the Asian countries to the global internet;

(b) if so, whether the financial assistance for the project has been sought from the Development Gateway Fund of the World Bank;

(c) whether the proposal is a corollary to the recommendation made by the United Nation's ICT Task Force for bridging the digital divide; and

(d) if so, by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

Indo-China cooperation for global standards in IT

5273. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether China has sought India's cooperation for developing global standards in information technology;

(b) the details of the fields in which this cooperation has been sought by China; and

(c) the other details of the Information Technology Cooperation which exists between the two countries?

Fire in telephone exchanges in A.P.

5274. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether PWG Naxals set on fire two telephone exchanges during the first week of February, 2002 in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the estimate of loss suffered in this fire; and

(c) the action taken to nab the culprits and prevent such incidents in future?

Help to China for STP and Software Training Institutes

5275. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:

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

(a) whether China has sought Indian help to set up Software Technology Parks (STP) and Software Training Institute;

(b) if so, the details of the professional expertise proposed to be given; and

(c) the other facilities to be provided to boost co-operation between the two countries?

Mismanagement in telecommunication

† 5276. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1934 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 21st March, 2002 and state:

(a) the names of the employees of Mainpuri, Agrah, Etah, Etawah against whom major and minor penalties have been imposed;

(b) the details of the charges against them;

(c) whether it is a fact that one TDM and an officer of Mainpuri have been penalised/punished by the court's the consumer forum during the last five years;

(d) whether it is also a fact that they have committed lot of irregularities/negligencies;

(e) the details thereof alongwith their names; and

(f) the action being taken by Government against them?

Utilization of funds under Media Lab Asia Project

5277. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 80 per cent of fund given to Media Lab Asia Project has been spent on non-research activities;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to see that funds under this project are utilized for the purpose it has been allocated?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Telephone exchanges in Villages

†5278. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the 'Rashtriya Sahara', dated the 2nd April, 2002 under the caption, 'Gaavon kay liyay shtapit teen hazaar exchange bijli kay intazaar main;

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

(c) the steps taken by Government to start these exchanges and by when these would start functioning?

Post offices with internet/e-mail/ computer facilities

5279. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices in the country both rural and urban, where internet, e-mail and computer facilities are made available for the past five years;

(b) whether Government have formulated any policy to expand these facilities through post offices or any other means to bring about communication revolution in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Categories of telephone users

5280. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to create 17 categories of telephone users which would be branded as commercial;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the commercial users would now have to pay an additional amount of Rs. 60 per month as rent and the number of free calls would be limited to 30;

(d) if so, since when and the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to impose an additional levy on the residential phones too; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Agreements with South Korea in IT sector

5281. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has signed two agreements with South Korea for closer co-operation in Information Technology sector; and

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

WLL telephone priority

†5282. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the basis for selection of priority of the subscriber in the W.L.L. (V.P.T.) telephone scheme;

(b) whether any complaints of irregularity in the selection has been received in Madhubani district;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the action taken after making inquiry into the matter; and

(d) if not, whether Government would enquire into the matter and take action through the monitoring Department?

Indian languages for I.T. Enabled Services

5283. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any schemes for using Indian languages for Information Technology Enabled Services;

(b) if so, what are those services and languages; and

(c) if not, whether Government would take up such schemes in the interest of Indian languages?

V.P.T. by private companies

5284. SHRI N. K. PREMA-CHANDRAN:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
PROF. M. M. AGARWAL:
SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:

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

(a) the names of such companies which have shown interest after the instruction issued by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology to provide telephone facility in the villages;

(b) the time and the action to be taken by Government against the companies failing in providing telephone facility to the villages and the criteria fixed for the same;

(c) the number of villages wherein telephone facility has been provided by the BSNL, so far, alongwith the target fixed for the year 2002-2003; and

(d) the targeted time-limit for providing telephones in such villages which are deprived of such facility?

Telephone facilities

†5285. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 459 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 22nd November, 2001 and state:

(a) the facts in respect of providing telephone connections to all 15947 applicants by the end of the year 2002 and the actual position by the beginning of second quarter of 2002 and district-wise details of the progress in this regard;

(b) whether the target would be achieved by the end of the year 2002; and

(c) the details of the action taken by Government along with financial position?

Waiting list for telephone connection in Madurai and Dindigul

5286. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the waiting list for telephone connections in Madurai, Dindigul, Theni Districts of Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether any new modern telephone exchanges are proposed to be opened during the current year initially in Madurai city;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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

Transfer of Executive Engineer

†5287. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one of the Executive Engineer (Civil) was transferred in June, 2001 from MTNL Delhi to Postal Wing but he did not join and after that he was transferred to Bhopal and then to Hyderabad and yet he did not join and after that the said Engineer joined the duty only when he was transferred to BSNL Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that said Engineer has been paid enhanced rate of leave salary and medical reimbursement amounting to Rs. 3,000 by the Principal Chief Engineer (Civil) in contravention of rules; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Waiting list for telephone connection in Punjab

5288. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the waiting list of telephone connections in various districts of Punjab at present, exchange-wise;

(b) since when these are pending and by when it is likely to be cleared;

(c) whether any new telephone exchanges are proposed to be opened to meet the demand of the people; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

C.B.I. investigation into corruption/irregularities

†5289. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Bureau of Investigation has inquired into the charges of corruptions and other irregularities levelled against the officers/employees of his ministry and its Corporations during the last three years;

(b) if so, the names of such officers/employees and the details of the charges levelled against them; and

(c) the present status of each of the cases?

Setting up of Cyber Regulations Appellate Tribunal

†5290. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a provision to set up a Cyber Regulations Appellate Tribunal under the Information Technology Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether above Tribunal has been set up;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the names of its members; and

(e) if not, by when it is likely to be set up?

Grant of Internet Service Providers licences

5291. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(a) the number of companies which were granted Internet Service Provider (ISP) licence in the country as on the 31st March, 2002;

(b) the number of people who have subscribed to internet facility as on the 31st March, 2002;

(c) whether the band-width presently available is sufficient to cater to growing demand of internet traffic in the country;

(d) whether Internet Service Providers have been permitted to obtain band-width from foreign satellites and establish International Gateways for internet traffic; and

(e) if so, the number of companies which have obtained band-width facility and also the extent to which the additional band-width so obtained would ease the traffic demand?

Strength of NIC employees

5292. SHRI S. S. CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the sanctioned strength of the NIC employees per district unit of NIC together with the rank/status of each employee as sanctioned by Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that several employees of NIC at various district units in Tamil Nadu continue to stay for several years even after getting promotions, though their stay is violative of the rule of establishment sanctioned by Government; and

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken in the matter?

Setting up of Video Conferencing Units

5293. SHRI S. S. CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Video Conferencing Units have been set up at the district levels by National Informatics Centre (NIC) in some States in the country;

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

(c) the reason for neglecting Southern States?

Reconstitution of Science and Technology Advisory Committee

5294. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Science and Technology Advisory Committee was reconstituted late in the year 1997;

(b) if so, what was the necessity felt to reconstitute it; and

(c) what were the thrust areas for R&D work and what were the achievements?

National Nutrition Mission in Andhra Pradesh

5295. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Nutrition Mission which was announced by the Prime Minister on the Independence Day Address of 2001, has come into force for implementation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and
 (c) what is the status of NNM in Andhra Pradesh?

(d) the reasons for the same; and
 (e) to what extent these reports have been found true?

Generation of power by sugar industries

5296. SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sugar industries have the potential to generate about 4000 MW of additional power per year;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to utilise this captive power generation capacity;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken for proper utilisation of by-products of sugar industry?

Export of rice

5297. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press report which appeared in the 'Economic Times' dated the 9th April, 2002 under the caption "High-quality subsidised FCI rice being exported at reduced price;

(b) if so, whether in the report, it has been pointed out that trading houses sold at \$13-15/t lower than the global rate;

(c) if so, the countries with whom such low prices contracts have been signed;

Loan from Sugar Development Fund

5298. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received 24 proposals of the Co-operative Sugar Factories recommended by the Government of Maharashtra for loan from the Sugar Development Fund in 1999; and

(b) if so, Government's response thereto and the steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

Construction of godowns in Uttar Pradesh

5299. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the financial grants/assistance given to Uttar Pradesh for constructing foodgrains storage godowns and to develop public distribution system infrastructure; and

(b) if so, the details of the funds granted to the State during the last three years?

Auction of lustre-lost wheat

5300. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have floated open tender to auction lustre-lost quality of wheat currently held in FCI buffers;

(b) if so, whether the flour millers of the North and of Andhra Pradesh have been barred from bidding; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Revamping PDS

5301. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Public Distribution System is corruption-ridden and there is an immediate need to streamline and revamp it;

(b) if so, the action plan devised by Government to make the system complaint-free and people-friendly; and

(c) the number of complaints received, the number of cases where grievances were redressed, the number of cases still pending and the number of corrupt officials booked for action during the last two years, State-wise?

BIS Hallmark Scheme on ornaments/jewellery

5302. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to a survey conducted by BIS it has been found that most of the jewellers in the country are cheating the consumers in sale of ornaments etc.;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to compulsorily enforce BIS Hallmark scheme on ornaments/jewellery sold by jewellers in the country; and

(c) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

Unutilized foodgrains of FCI godowns

5303. DR. A. K. PATEL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that substantial quantity of foodgrains remain unutilized in the FCI godowns; and

(b) if so, whether Government would consider revision of issue price of foodgrains to increase offtake?

Increase in offtake of foodgrains

5304. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central foodgrains stocks are far in excess of the minimum buffer stock norms creating problem of abundance;

(b) if so, the details thereof with State/Circle-wise breakup of the food stocks;

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been poor offtake of foodgrains under PDS and TPDS;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what are the measures taken to increase the offtake of foodgrains by the States as also the steps taken/proposed to be taken to reduce the food stocks?

Declining trend in consumption and expenditure on food

5305. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 55th Round (1999-2000) of National Sample Survey (NSS) on house-hold consumption

confirmed declining trend in consumption, expenditure on food;

(b) if so, the details of the findings of the survey;

(c) whether it is also a fact that consumption of other non-cereal foods like fruits/vegetables, milk, eggs have gone up; and

(d) if so, what measures Government propose to take to reorient agriculture policies like cropping pattern, food procurement in view of the above findings?

Handling of foodgrains situation

5306. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Civil Supplies and Public Distribution has criticised Government's handling of the foodgrains situation in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to address the criticism?

Precautions to stop anti-India activities in Afghanistan

5307. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the helps being offered/provided by India to Afghanistan to make it a self-reliant country;

(b) the financial burden on this account; and

(c) the precautions India propose to take so that anti-India activities are not re-emerged in Afghanistan through regrouping of Taliban etc.,?

Chinese reaction to US statement to use nuclear weapons

5308. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement of Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Mr. Lizhaoxing, as reported in the 'Hindu' dated March 18, 2002, attacking US for its Nuclear Posture Review and charging the US of nuclear black-mail of China, in reference to the US President's recent statement that the US would use nuclear weapons against 7 countries including China and Russia; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction in the context of deteriorating Sino-US relations and its impact on World peace especially the peace-scenario in South Asia?

Assistance to Afghanistan in farm sector

5309. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Afghanistan has sought India's expertise in sericulture, seed processing, poultry, fishing and veterinary services, besides agricultural equipments and help in farm sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken to help that country before the sowing season starts?

SAARC Finance and Planning Minister's meeting on poverty alleviation

5310. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the latest SAARC Finance and Planning Minister's meeting on poverty

alleviation has endorsed an action plan for full operationalisation of the South Asia Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) and move faster towards South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA);

(b) if so, the details of the action plan along with the details of the Indian experiment on poverty alleviation reflected in the above meeting; and

(c) the steps taken, if any, for more flexibility in the matters related to Intellectual Property Rights of developing countries?

Opening of a Mission School in Oman

5311. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated the 26th April, 2002 under the caption "Indian Mission's schools for scandal";

(b) whether Oman Government have indicted Indian Embassy in Oman for having allowed an Indian to open a private school against the laws of that country;

(c) what is the in-built mechanism to check and control misuse of influence in his Ministry to avoid reoccurrence of such cases; and

(d) the action taken by Government in this regard?

Cultural heritages in the vaults of imperial powers

5312. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether several Indian cultural heritages are locked up in the vaults of

imperial powers like U.K., Portugal and France;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken to procure them back?

South Asian Nation's joint action plan to combat poverty

5313. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether seven South Asian Nations on 9th April, 2002 agreed on a joint action plan to combat poverty in their impoverished region;

(b) if so, what were the other decisions taken in the meeting;

(c) whether the South Asian Nations have agreed to ask the developed nations for debt relief, greater market access for exports and removal of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers; and

(d) if so, to what extent these suggestions have been agreed upon by the developed countries?

Visa-on-arrival facility

5314. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sri Lanka has extended its 'Visa-on-arrival' facility to India;

(b) if so, the name of the other countries which have extended similar facility to India; and

(c) the names of the countries to whom India has extended such facility?

**Foreign Minister's Myanmar and
Thailand visits**

5315. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has visited Myanmar and Thailand in the month of March, 2002;

(b) if so, what were the main topics discussed with both Myanmar and Thailand;

(c) whether Government have decided to have a trade and tourism corridor *via* Myanmar;

(d) if so, whether the Myanmar had recently declared that it would not allow its territory to be used for anti-India activities; and

(e) if so, what were the main agreements reached during his visit?

**SAARC Information Ministers'
Conference**

5316. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India attended the SAARC Information Ministers' Conference held on 6th March, 2002 in Pakistan;

(b) if so, the main subjects discussed in the Conference;

(c) whether any proposal was submitted by Indian representative in the SAARC meeting; and

(d) if so, the outcome of the Conference?

Implementation of Mahakali Treaty

5317. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 379 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th April, 2002 and state:

(a) whether both India and Nepal have agreed to give priority to implementation of Mahakali Treaty;

(b) whether during the Nepalese Prime Minister's visit to India, any agreement has been reached in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

**Declaration of persona-non-granta by
Pakistan to Indian diplomat**

5318. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two officers of Indian High Commission in Pakistan were declared as persona-non-granta by Pakistan because of their alleged involvement in the attack on a church in Rawalpindi;

(b) if so, whether Government have vehemently denied the charge and lodged a strong protest to the Governments of Pakistan; and

(c) if so, Pakistan Government response thereto?

**India and European Union's joint
fight against global terrorism**

5319. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and the 15-Nations European Union have decided to work

together more closely to fight against global terrorism in the coming years;

(b) if so, whether Indo-EU Summit's joint declaration was signed recently;

(c) if so, the details of the steps being considered in this regard; and

(d) to what extent both India and EU have been successful in fighting terrorism?

Visa-on-arrival to Indians by Sri Lanka

5320. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision to unilaterally give Indian passport holders visa-on-arrival in the Island is likely to be announced by the Sri Lankan Government;

(b) if so, whether Sri Lanka is issuing visas on arrival even without insisting on reciprocity on India's part;

(c) whether Sri Lanka has pointed out that India should have not objection to Sri Lanka's unilateral action as India is bent on improving trade and investment relations with Sri Lanka; and

(d) if so, to what extent India has welcomed this move?

Assistance for agricultural institutions in Afghanistan

5321. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to assist Afghanistan on rebuilding the agricultural institutions damaged seriously;

(b) if so, the assistance proposed; and

(c) the action taken in this regard?

Indo-US talks regarding reconstruction work in Afghanistan

5322. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and the US have held talks to coordinate reconstruction work in Afghanistan and enhance stability in that country;

(b) whether both the countries have agreed to train Afghanistan Military and police;

(c) the number of Indian personnel to be sent to impart training in Afghanistan; and

(d) the other details in this regard?

America's reported statement to use nuclear weapons

5323. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report published in the Indian Express dated March 13, 2002, captioned "N-report casts PALL on US-Russia ties"; and

(b) if so, Government's response to the reported irritant presented by the recent US Department's policy review, outlining a contingency plan of the US to use nuclear weapons against atleast seven countries including Russia, in the context of global peace scenario?

Diplomatic efforts to defuse war like situation between Israel and Palestine

5324. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any diplomatic efforts to help defusing war-like situation between Israel and Palestine;

(b) if so, whether it has helped to defuse the problems; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Fraudulent activities of agencies in procuring passports/visas

5325. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of increasing fraudulent activities by many agencies in procuring passports/visas and also duping of innocent victims; and

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to prevent such activities?

Anti-India activities of extremists from neighbouring countries

5326. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some extremists are operating against India from neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Pakistan, Malaysia, Philippines and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed/taken to check these extremists and their families from taking refuge in or availing the hospitality of these countries for anti-India activities?

Interests of Indian businessmen in Zimbabwe

5327. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared

in the 'Hindustan Times' dated the 26th April, 2002 under the caption "Indians are looters in Zimbabwe";

(b) whether the Indian businessmen in Zimbabwe have been facing the wrath of their militia who have asked them to hand-over their properties;

(c) whether Government have taken up the matter with the Government of Zimbabwe to safeguard interests of the Indians in that country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken in the matter?

Applications pending with passport offices in Punjab

5328. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications pending for issue of passport with the passport offices in Punjab;

(b) since when, these are pending; and

(c) by when, these are likely to be cleared?

Opening of Canadian consulate office in Punjab

5329. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is pending to start a consulate office of Canadian High Commission in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any demand for the same has been received from Punjab; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when it is likely to be started?

Use of nuclear weapons by Pakistan against India

5330. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement made by the Pakistan President about the use of nuclear weapons against India in the event of possible war between India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction in regard thereto?

Military cooperation with NATO

† 5331. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement has been signed or offer has been made for military cooperation with NATO:

(b) if so, the details and purpose thereof;

(c) whether it is not a diversion from the non-alignment policy of India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Meeting of Indo-China Joint Working Group on terrorism

5332. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Joint Working Group of India and China had met to deliberate upon counter terrorism measures;

(b) if so, the scope and framework of the dialogue;

(c) whether Pak cross-border terrorism also figured in the talks; and

(d) if so, the details of the action plan to combat terrorism?

Educated unemployed youth in M.P.

5333. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of educated unemployed youth registered in various employment exchanges in Madhya Pradesh during the last three years;

(b) the number of educated youths passing out from the colleges and universities in the State who are in search of jobs, during the last three years; and

(c) the steps taken so far, by Government to provide employment to the educated unemployed persons/youths of the State?

Pitiable condition of salt labourers

5334. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the pitiable condition of labourers working in the field of salt in the coastal areas;

(b) the maximum average age and emoluments/service conditions of these workers;

(c) the common diseases afflicting these workers;

(d) whether Government intend to promote necessary health care schemes in these areas or extend assistance to them through NGOs; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

National Child Labour Project Centres

5335. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of National Child Labour Projects Centres set up by Government so far to rehabilitate the Children;

(b) whether it is a fact that these centres are not opened in some districts of various States due to lack of adequate funds;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

Steps to increase employment Opportunities in small scale sector

5336. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a downward trend in labour employment in small scale sector;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that this downward trend is due to Government's policy; and

(d) whether Government propose to take any concrete steps to increase employment opportunities and make condition of labourers better in small scale sectors like beedi, weaving etc.?

Payment of Statutory dues

5337. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that jute mills are defaulting heavily in payment of statutory dues like P.F., E.S.I., D.A., Gratuity, Bonus etc. to their workers;

(b) if so, whether Government have effected any action to recover these dues from the Jute Mill Owners who exploit the workers; and

(c) if so, the details of the recovery and the outstanding dues for last three years?

Cutting of trees in Bhavishya Nidhi Enclave

5338. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 10 big trees were cut down and removed in Bhavishya Nidhi Enclave, New Delhi without any permission from the concerned authorities for construction of community centre in the name/memory of CPFC and EPF organisations around the temple;

(b) if so, whether Government would probe into the matter for cutting green trees and to punish the persons/officers responsible for such illegal action; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Retrenchment of factory workers

5339. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian factories retrenched about 8 per cent of the total number of employees during the years 1998—2000;

(b) the approximate number of people lost job during that period; and

(c) the action proposed to arrest the declining employment trend in the factories?

Strike by trade unions

5340. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the eight trade unions have gone on a nation-wide strike on the 16th April, 2002;

- (b) if so, the reasons for their strike; (c) if not, whether there is a proposal to do so and by when?
- (c) the estimated loss incurred by Government due to said strike; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to resolve their demands?

Plight of beedi workers

5341. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are aware of the plight of the beedi workers;
- (b) if so, the present status of the beedi workers;
- (c) the average wages of beedi workers, both male and female, separately; and
- (d) the steps taken for welfare of the beedi workers?

Jobs in industrial sector

5342. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian industrial sector shed more than 7 lakh jobs in two years ending 2000; and
- (b) if so, the measures proposed to ensure that industry generates enough jobs for employees in the factory sector?

Skill development fund

5343. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH "SURYA": Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a skill Development Fund has been created to prepare work-force in the wake of industrial restructuring;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and

Missing credits of ESIC

5344. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Employees State Insurance Corporation failed to trace the missing credits of Rs. 33.29 lakhs deposited in the bank by more than 290 employers of various factories during May, 1988 to June, 1990;
- (b) whether the missing credit was tracked sometime in October 2001 and by then the ESIC had suffered a loss of interest amounting to Rs. 45.19 lakh; and
- (c) whether the Comptroller & Auditor General of India has commented on this lapse on the part of the ESIC in his report for the year ending March, 2001 and if so, Government's response thereto?

Rate of interest on EPF

†5345. SHRI DEVI PRASAD SINGH:
SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Central Board of Trustees has recommended to continue with the existing nine and half per cent rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) Government's reaction thereto?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

National Policy on Occupational Safety and Health at Work Places

5346. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to formulate a National Policy on Occupational Safety and Health at Work Places;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have prepared a programme to consult concerned trade unions/national centres to have their views before formulating the policy;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) by when a legislation in the matter is likely to be brought before the Parliament?

Counter service for EPFO beneficiaries

5347. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up "Any time any where" counter service for Employees Provident Fund Organisations (EPFO) beneficiaries;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the number of such counters to be set up in Orissa and locations thereof; and

(c) by when these counters are likely to start working?

Plight of workers of Khatau Mills, Mumbai

5348. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the plight of workers of the Khatau Mills,

Mumbai, who are facing hard for their livelihood due to closure of the mill some years back;

(b) whether Government are also aware that despite court's and Government's orders workers are not being paid their dues in contravention of Labour laws and only suicide is a way out;

(c) whether Government would intervene in the matter to implement Court's order to pay the dues;

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(e) if not, whether Government would leave thousand of workers and their families to die without bread?

Allotment of Security National code number to workers

5349. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allot a Security National code number to all the workers enrolled with Employees Provident Fund Scheme as per the recommendation of the Indian Labour Conference;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when this recommendation is likely to be implemented?

Wage discrimination on gender basis

†5350. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that contrary to the claims discrimination in wages on gender basis is rampant even in PSUs served by contract workers

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

particularly where construction work is going on despite Equal Remuneration Act and other laws;

(b) whether Government have conducted any survey in this regard;

(c) if so, the findings thereof and if not, whether Government propose to conduct thorough survey in this regard; and

(d) the steps Government have taken to end discrimination against women workers in respect of wages and other amenities?

Wage fixation in electronic news media

5351. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to constitute a commission for fixation of wages in electronic news media;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Labour productivity

†5352. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have ascertained the possibilities of increasing productivity in workers category in the country;

(b) if so, to what extent the existing productivity is estimated to be further increased;

(c) whether Government have also formulated any scheme for increasing the productivity; and

(d) if so, the broad outlines thereof?

New Pension Scheme

5353. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an expert group on Government pensions had recommended a restructured two-tier pension scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the existing pension system is likely to be done away on the introduction of the new pension scheme; and

(d) by when the new pension scheme is likely to be put in place?

Fixation of pensions

5354. DR. SWAMI SAKSHI JI MAHARAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to fix pension at additional rate of one per cent per year to the employees who have rendered more than 33 years of service with effect from 1.1.1996 as has been recommended by the Fifth Pay Commission;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government have received any representations from various trade unions/individuals for fixing the pension only on the basis of last pay drawn instead of the average of the last ten months pay drawn; and

(d) if so, the action Government have taken thereon?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.