

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the December 16, 2004/Agrahayana 25, 1926 (Saka)*

(Ministries: Prime Minister; Agro and Rural Industries; Atomic Energy; Coal; Communications and Information Technology; External Affairs; Labour and Employment; Mines; Ocean Development; Overseas Indian Affairs; Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Planning; Science and Technology; Shipping, Road Transport and Highways; Small Scale Industries; Space; Statistics and Programme Implementation)

Total number of questions — 155

Donation for ARIs

1435. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have closed the donation for the Agro industries;

(b) whether the funds released by Government are not enough to run these industries; and

(c) if so, the details about the Agro industries and the release of funds in the year 2003-04?

PMRY in Maharashtra

1436. SHRISANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently reviewed performance of on-going projects

under the Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether his Ministry have set any target for generating more employment opportunities in Maharashtra State under this scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Preservation of fruits and vegetables

†1437. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bhabha Atomic Research Centre has developed a technique of long lasting preservation of fruits, vegetables and cereals; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Threat on National Security due to mining of mineral sands

1438. SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any project is pending with Government to obtain permission for mining of mineral sands from the coastal areas of Kollam or from Alappuzha districts of Kerala State by any private or joint venture firms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government see any threat on the National Security to allow mining of mineral sands containing rare earths by private companies; and

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

Storage of radioactive wastes

1439. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that management and disposal of long-life radioactive wastes has been a technical and political problem world-over;

(b) whether it is also a fact that M/s Reliance Industries Ltd., have released a comprehensive report to redress this issue; and

(c) if so, the details thereof especially those relating to short-term and viable long-term solution for waste storage?

Private participation in Atomic Energy production

1440. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the amended Atomic Energy Act waiting for the approval of the

Parliament provides for private participation in nuclear energy production in the country;

(b) whether according to the amended provision, the Department of Atomic Energy and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited will be bound to provide technical support to the private power producer; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Appointment of UDCs

1441. SHRI VIDYA SAGAR NISHAD: Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that examination for the post of UDC were held in the month of June, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that even after a lapse of about three years of examination, selected candidates have not been called to join ;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) by when, the selected candidates would be called to join?

Setting up of desalination plant at Chennai

1442. SHRI RAMA MUNIREDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre has worked on desalination technologies and has experience in erecting large-scale desalination plants;

(b) if so, the details of plants erected by them to help drinking water problem; and

(c) whether they would participate in the proposed desalination plants to be set up in Chennai that would produce 300 million litres of potable water a day?

Royalties on coal

1443. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) considering that the ratio between royalties for higher and inferior rates in coals as in the year 1971 has progressively declined against the inferior varieties to successive revision of royalty whether Government propose to consider restoration of the earlier ratio of 1971; and

(b) if so, within what time-frame and if not, the reasons therefor?

Black marketing of coal

1444. SHRIMANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
DR. ALLADI P.
RAJKUMAR:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a rampant black-marketing of coal in the market encouraged by a massive ring of mafia leaders in connivance with officials of the Coal Companies and Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have analysed the basic reasons for black-marketing on such a gigantic scale and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

Amendment of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act

1445. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided not to bring amendment to Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act to bring private players into this sector;

(b) if so, the reasons behind not bringing an amendment to the above Act as proposed by previous Government;

(c) by when the Ministry is going to release mission document for coal 2030; and

(d) the salient features in the proposed document?

Loss making units in coal sector

1446. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has proposed a Rs. 6000 crore rehabilitation fund for Eastern Coalfields, Bharat cooking Coal and Central Coalfields;

(b) if so, the time-frame for rehabilitation of these units and whether rehabilitation would also result in upgrading the production and productivity of the labour; and

(c) whether there are any other loss making units in the coal sectors and what is the perspective plan of Government with regard to such units?

**Use of surface mining machines by
SECL**

† 1447. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the names of locations in the country where surface mining machines are used for coal mining;

(b) the cost of mining by the surface mining machines along with the cost on manual mining of the coal;

(c) whether there is any plan to use surface mining by SECL;

(d) the reasons for cancellation of tenders invited for this purpose by SECL few years ago ; and

(e) the details thereof?

**Installation of coal mines safety
devices**

1448. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various experts have made recommendations to fulfil and instal numerous coal mine safety devices and practices in our country;

(b) whether it is a fact that none of these recommendations have been implemented in the country;

(c) whether Government are aware of the huge loss of human life in periodic coal mine accidents in the country;

(d) what steps would Government initiate to instal all such safety devices to reduce coal mine accidents; and

(e) the specific action proposed in the next six months by Government in this regard?

**Losses due to non increase of royalty
on coal**

† 1449. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to increase royalty on coal;

(b) whether it is a fact that despite the increase in prices of coal, States are suffering heavy losses due to non increase in royalty to the States;

(c) whether Government have received any proposal to increase royalty from Madhya Pradesh Government;

(d) if so, the details of the steps taken by Government; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Theft of coal from SECL

† 1450. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether pilferage worth crores of rupees of coal in the name of rejected coal is going on in SECL;

(b) whether this would be brought under the CBI investigation;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Database and information
networking scheme in Madhya
Pradesh**

† 1451. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

of Madhya Pradesh have demanded an amount of Rs. 55.84 lakhs as Central share for implementation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme regarding strengthening of data base and information networking programme in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) if so, by when proposed amount is likely to be sanctioned and released?

Tax exemption and duty relaxation on raw material

1452. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set a target of atleast 200 million telephones by 2007;

(b) if so, whether Government would require equipment worth Rs. 1,00,000 crores;

(c) if so, whether his Ministry has already approached Finance Ministry on the terms the indigenous manufacturing sector are facing as the industry has been demanding tax exemption and duty relaxation on raw materials and components; and

(d) if so, to what extent the Finance Minister has agreed and by when Government are likely to start taking action for improving telephones as suggested by the Ministry to achieve it by 2007?

Demand of postal employees

1453. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the All India Postal Extra Department Employees Union has decided to go on an indefinite strike in support of

its demand for merger of 50 per cent Dearness Allowance with pay, grant of trade union facilities and pension;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government to look into their demands?

Conversion of vacant looking post offices into shopping areas

1454. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the action taken to modernize the Indian Post Offices to combat the hi-tech invasion;

(b) whether Government proposed to transform the vacant looking post offices into shopping areas; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Downfall of BPO Sector

1455. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have noticed the future downfall of the BPO Sector;

(b) whether the U.S. stands about the outsourcing issue has any impact upon the Indian IT Sector;

(c) whether the India's most employed youth in IT Sector would have to lose their job in future; and

(d) Government's stand in the matter?

**Retired Telecom Officers working
with Reliance Infocom**

1456. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the wake of discovery of the gray international call racket, Government have set up a Vigilance Squad to monitor international calls round-the-clock;

(b) whether the Vigilance Squad has focused on the suspected involvement of former telecom officers now working with the Reliance Infocom;

(c) whether the suspected officials of Telecom Department had secured Government's permission, after retirement to join Reliance Infocom; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Demand of private telecom
operators**

1457. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Access Deficit Charge regime, supposed to provide support for rural telecom is fraught with regulatory, legal and procedural short-comings;

(b) whether the Universal Service Fund, operational from 2002, is adequate to provide support for the rural telecom expansion;

(c) whether the private telecom operators are opposing the ADC regime and demanding its abolition; and

(d) if so, Government's views thereon?

**Malfunctioning of exchanges in
BSNL areas**

1458. SHRIB.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been complaints of malfunctioning of the exchanges in BSNL areas whereby local calls of 3 minute duration get snapped after 10-20 seconds due to technical fault;

(b) if so, whether the local customer entitled to get 3 minute talk time for local calls has to make many calls aggregating 3 minute duration and pay multiple call charges instead of single local call; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to rectify the system to ensure full utilization of call time?

**Opening of Post Offices in Gram
Panchayat villages**

†1459. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the total number of Gram Panchayat villages without any post office is 1,15,605 in the country which is about 49.35 per cent of the Gram Panchayat villages in the country; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to open and provide post offices in all such Gram Panchayat villages in the country where there are no post offices and by when?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Benefit of I.T. to rural
areas**

†1460. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme to formulate plan to provide benefit of information technology to rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that because more than 90 per cent of population of the country is not conversant with English so they can be provided the benefit of information technology either in Hindi or other regional languages; and

(d) if so, keeping in view the above fact, what steps have been taken by Government for development, promotion and propagation of information technology through Hindi?

**Cellular service in
Kerala**

1461. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cellular services are being provided throughout India including Kerala;

(b) if not, the places where this service is not available at present; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to provide satisfactory service at par with other services being provided by private cell operators?

**Computerisation of post offices
in Uttar Pradesh**

†1462. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any necessary steps for computerisation of post offices in the cities of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of post offices computerised in the State during the financial year 2004-05;

(d) the number of computerised and non-computerised post offices in the State at present; and

(e) the amount proposed to be spent by Government on the modernization of post offices in the State?

**IT infrastructure in
the villages**

1463. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to connect villages with the IT infrastructure;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and how would Ministry help villages to use and enjoy the fruits of IT boom?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Service tax on telephone

1464. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that service tax is levied on telephone rentals also by MTNL and BSNL;

(b) if so, the basis on which the same is done when rent is also charged on the instrument;

(c) whether Government have received any representations in the matter opposing such a levy;

(d) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken thereon; and

(e) since when the service tax on telephone is being levied?

Vidya Vahini Project

†1465. SHRIMATI KUM KUMRAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Government aided Senior Secondary Schools where 'Vidya Vahini' project is being carried out to connect through internet;

(b) the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) if not, the reasons for not starting this project; and

(d) by when this project would be started?

Recruitment rules of TRAI

1466. SHRIM. A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has framed its own Recruitment Rules;

(b) if so, the rules framed with regard to the post of Assistant;

(c) whether it is a fact that some Assistants have been recruited directly by the TRAI from open market whose appointments were summarily rejected by the erstwhile TRAI higher authorities;

(d) if so, the reasons for overruling the decision of the old authority;

(e) whether it is a fact that all 08 (eight) Assistants recruited directly from the open market are the kins of serving employees of the TRAI; and

(f) if so, the details of these employees?

Interest on deposit in post office

†1467. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no interest is given on the amount exceeding prescribed limit deposited in the savings account of a Post Office whereas there is no limit on the maximum amount for depositing in savings account of banks;

(b) if so, the comparative details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken any measures/given suggestions to remove such anomalies;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether Government have received any complaints in this regard; if so, the action taken thereon?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Opening of Post Offices in Pitampura and Vikaspuri

1468. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a number of representations since the last ten years to open a Post Office in West Enclave, Pitampura and in Vikaspuri to cater to the needs of more than twenty Central Government Housing Societies of the area;

(b) the action taken in the matter; and

(c) the action proposed to provide post office facilities to the people of these areas who are facing great difficulties to save in R.Ds and saving accounts etc., in absence of Post Office within a Kilometre area?

Revenue share mechanism

1469. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any assessment regarding the possible reasons for default in payment at prescribed rates;

(b) whether the differences in ADC for National and International call is the major reasons for this; and

(c) if so, after having settled past issues, whether TRAI and Government would be opting for a revenue share mechanism to eliminate possibility of under invoicing and under payment?

Distribution of Telephone Directory

1470. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Jharkhand Telephone Directory has not been distributed in Bokaro since 2003;

(b) if not, the reasons for the delay and by when these are expected to be distributed to the subscribers at the earliest;

(c) when was the Jharkhand Telephone Directory last distributed in Bokaro; and

(d) whether it has been examined to include the telephone number of other telecom service providers in this directory and whether TRAI would make it mandatory for these service providers to include their number as the public is put to immense difficulties with the listings?

Telephone connection to Gram Sabha

1471. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of such Gram Sabhas in the country where telephones are functioning and the number of such Gram Sabhas which have applied for the telephones, State-wise;

(b) whether any target has been fixed by the Department to connect all Gram Panchayat of the country with telephone; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Competition between BSNL and private mobile operators

1472. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 50 lakh BSNL and MTNL landline phones

have been surrendered and disconnected by the people in India during 2002-03 in view of the growing demand for mobile phones;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a tough competition between BSNL and private mobile operators in the mobile phone sector; and

(c) if so, what strategy Government are working out to increase the volume of mobile phone subscribers in BSNL to offset the losses incurred by them by the surrender of landlines?

Recurring Deposit Scheme in post offices through agents

1473. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether recurring deposit schemes are being implemented in the post offices through appointed agents;

(b) if so, the amount paid to agents annually, State-wise;

(c) whether post offices gain, if, the deposits are accepted directly by the post offices from the depositors and if so, the reasons for not adopting this procedure which was prevalent earlier; and

(d) whether pass book is kept by agents and if so, the steps taken to ensure that poor and illiterate people are not cheated?

Microwave link between India and Myanmar

1474. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new direct Telecommunication (microwave) link

between India and Myanmar has been inaugurated; and

(b) if so, by when the direct link is likely to be established, and its estimated cost and the other details thereon?

Internet facilities in the villages

†1475. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in the country having been provided with the facility of internet and the details thereof; and

(b) by when the uplinking of all the villages of the country with internet is likely to be completed?

Speed post service in District Headquarters

†1476. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of district headquarters in various States of the country where speed post service is not available;

(b) by when all such District Headquarters of these States are likely to be brought under this network; and

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

Expansion of telephone and mobile services in Bihar

†1477. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have formulated any action plan for expansion of telephone and mobile service in next three years' time period in Bihar; and

(b) if so, the nature of the said action plan and year-wise target thereof along with the method to be adopted to achieve the target?

Incentives to the subscribers

1478. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL has started giving incentive points to its telephone subscribers;

(b) if so, since when and the rules/guidelines laid down for the purpose;

(c) whether the relevant rules etc., have been intimated to the subscribers; and

(d) if not, by when they are proposed to be communicated to the subscribers and in what manner?

Telecom Policy

1479. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to revamp the Telecom Policy;

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

(c) whether the private sector and the other institutions would be consulted before the formation of Telecom Policy and if so, the details thereof?

Foreign investment in telecom sector

1480. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to invite foreign entrepreneurs to invest in the fast growing telecom sector in India;

(b) if so, the expected amount of investment from foreign entrepreneurs; and

(c) to what extent the telecom sector is expected to be benefited?

FDI in telecom sector

1481. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in order to achieve a telecom network coverage of 70 per cent against the current 20 per cent, Government propose to raise the Foreign Direct Investment in Telecom Sector to 74 per cent from 49 per cent;

(b) if so, the various aspects taken into consideration in this regard; and whether this involved any security angle; if so, the views expressed by the security and intelligence outfits in this regard; and

(c) the decision since taken in this matter?

Microwave link with Sri Lanka

1482. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Microwave Link has been established recently with Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details and advantages of this link; and

(c) whether any similar link has been established or is planned with other neighbouring countries also?

Modernisation of post offices

1483. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices modernised in Karnataka during 2003-04 and 2004-05;

(b) whether it is a fact that some of the Head Post Offices in Bangalore are functioning all seven days in a week; and

(c) if so, whether it would be extended to other Head Post Offices in other districts of Karnataka?

Misutilisation of mobile phones

1484. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the misutilisation of mobile phone by the anti-social people; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to check the racket?

Second phase of strategic partnership with USA

1485. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

DR. AKHILESH DAS:
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether after a successful completion of first phase, US Under Secretary for Commerce visited India to discuss for second phase of next steps in strategic partnership (NSSP) initiative;

(b) if so, the details of the steps to be taken in this phase of the strategic Partnership discussed with him and the outcome thereof; and the progress so far made under the first phase of the strategy;

(c) whether both, Prime Minister of India and U.S. President had agreed to launch second phase of NSSP by mid October, 2004;

(d) if so, to what extent both phases of agreement reached between two leaders have been fully implemented; and

(e) to what extent it would be beneficial to India?

Indo-Pak Prime Ministers' meeting

1486. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI V. NARAYANA-SAMY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the recent meeting of Indian Prime Minister and Pakistan Prime Minister at Delhi, all outstanding issues including cross border terrorism was discussed;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Pakistan Prime Minister on increasing terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir by the Pakistan trained militants; and

(c) whether during the visit, there had been any impact of absurd statements made by President of Pakistan day to day?

Modification to export licensing policies

1487. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether US has agreed to ease export controls on Indian Civilian nuclear and space facilities after PM's visit to USA;

(b) if so, whether US have made modification to US export licensing policies that will foster cooperation in commercial space programmes and permit certain exports to power plants at safeguarded nuclear facilities;

(c) if so, whether this modification also include removing ISRO headquarters from so-called Entity List of Department of Commerce; and

(d) if so, to what extent it would be helpful for India and whether all negotiations in this regard have fully settled?

Pakistan President's statement regarding Indo-Pak talks

1488. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the recent statement of President General Musharraf to the effect that the 'Vibes that are now coming do not encourage a process of normalisation of relations with Pakistan'; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction in this regard?

Participation in SAARC

1489. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken a decision not to participate in the forthcoming SAARC summit to be hosted by Bangladesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Inter-University debate conducted by ICWA

1490. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Council of World Affairs had started annual Inter-University Debate in memory of Smt. Indira Gandhi, Champion of World Peace, to provide students a centre for national integration;

(b) if so, since when the debate commenced and continued and the number of Universities that took part during the years 1996 to 2002 by sponsoring students for this conference annually; and

(c) how much amount was spent by Government for organizing this debate?

Renting out of surplus portion of ICWA premises

1491. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Council of World Affairs had rented out surplus portion of their building to the Government Institutions like Institute of Defence Studies, Children Films Society, etc. and whether prior permission was obtained by the ICWA; and

(b) if so, the year in which these Institutions were given premises on rent and whether this allotment was in violation of Government Rules and Regulations?

Lifting of sanctions by USA

1492. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USA has lifted its sanctions against India for export of select equipment for civilian nuclear and space facilities in September, 2004;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the Indian projects expected to be benefited from the lifting of US curb?

Closing down of Visa office by Singapore

1493. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Singapore Government has decided to close its Visa office at Kolkata; and

(b) if so, whether Government would take up the matter with Singapore Government to stop such a move?

Chinese help to defuse Indo-Pak tension

1494. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether China had helped India to defuse Indo-Pak tension two years back as appeared in media;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's policy of defusing the tension between India and Pakistan?

Indo-ASEAN Conference

†1495. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of matters discussed during third Indo-ASEAN Conference;

(b) the details of issues raised by India; and

(c) the details of issues raised for peace and development and in what manner they would be implemented?

Offer of FBI's help to India

1496. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI RAJKUMAR
DHOT:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR
SANGHI:
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US Ambassador has recently offered the assistance of Federal Bureau of Investigation to investigate the serial blasts in the North Eastern States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any such offer has been received from any European countries also;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government are aware that the Government of United States of America have circulated a document earlier which seeks to alienate the North Eastern Region from the country; and

(f) whether Government have taken a view of this offer of assistance keeping in view the security of the country?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Extradition treaty with Thailand

1497. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Thailand are finalising an extradition treaty;

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be signed; and

(c) what is the likely achievement of the treaty?

Death of Indian Haj pilgrims

1498. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Haj pilgrims who lost their lives in Saudi Arabia during Haj pilgrimage in 2004 due to stampede and other causes, separately; and

(b) the nature and extent of help provided by Government of India and Saudi Arabia to the families of those who lost their lives during the pilgrimage?

Indo-China Cooperation

†1499. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement to enhance natural cooperation between India and China has recently been entered in order to prevent increasing terrorist activities in Asia;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any issue regarding prevention of smuggling of narcotics and an arrangement regarding non-utilisation of

territory of one country to prevent terrorism within the territories of other country was discussed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

MoU with Myanmar to prevent terrorism

†1500. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have signed any Memorandum of Understanding with Myanmar to prevent increasing incidents of terrorists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Myanmar have also signed any Memorandum of Understanding regarding enhancing cooperation in the field to training of security forces and police; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Questionnaire sent by United Nations

1501. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any questionnaire was received from the United Nations Committee on Counter-Terrorism following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA, inquiring about the measures being pursued in India to strengthen anti-terrorist measures;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details furnished against the said questionnaire along with details of the measures both under implementation and contemplated especially in pursuance to the Security Council resolution No. 1373, as furnished in May, 2004 and the UNSC

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Chairman by our permanent representative in UN; and

(d) whether the Ministry of Home Affairs coordinated in formulation of the said report and fully consented to its inputs?

Indo-Russian cooperation against terrorism

1502. SHRIM.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Russia have agreed to join hands against terrorism;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any broad framework has been built to counter terrorism;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether both Governments have agreed to share intelligence reports in this regard; and

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

Discussion with Pak Prime Minister regarding Indian PoWs

1503. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government discussed with Pak Prime Minister on his recent visit to India on Indian Prisoners of War captured by Pakistan in 1971-72 Indo-Pak war, for their release; and

(b) if so, the response of the Pakistan Government?

Indian criminals hiding in Pakistan

1504. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many persons wanted for trial in India for various crimes committed in this country are hiding in Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether a list of such persons was handed over to Foreign Minister of Pakistan during his visit to India in September, 2004;

(c) if so, the response of Foreign Minister of Pakistan; and

(d) whether these persons are likely to be extradited to India in near future?

Indo-US joint working group on terrorism

1505. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a joint Indo-US working group on counter-terrorism has been operational in India since January, 2000, and there were certain unfortunate experiences with US intelligence agencies;

(b) if so, whether this working group is still operational and what positive benefits/ useful inputs we have had, which strengthened our national security set-up; and

(c) whether Government propose such joint working group with other countries also in combating menace of terrorism?

Duties and responsibilities of Indian Embassies

1506. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the duties and responsibilities of the Indian Embassies and High Commissions located in different countries with annual expenditure on each;

(b) whether it is a fact that numerous complaints have been received regarding unhelpful attitude of the Indian Embassy/ Mission staff to the plight of the Indians working abroad, particularly in the Gulf countries; and

(c) if so, what measures are taken to ensure that the staff manning the Indian Embassies/Missions abroad respond positively and promptly to the needs of NRIs?

Delegation from China

1507. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether delegation of China visited India in the month of October, 2004;

(b) if so, the subjects of mutual interest which were discussed with them;

(c) the agreements reached during the visit and other details in this regard; and

(d) the assistance expected therefrom?

Mechanism to monitor the national floor level wage

1508. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the national floor level wage is violated in many States;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of such violations for the last three years, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) whether there is any mechanism to monitor the implementation of the national floor level wage;

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

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether there is any proposal for deciding a national bench mark for minimum wages; and

(g) if so, the details thereof including the action taken for the same?

Contract labour in Delhi airport

1509. SHRI CHITTABRATA
MAJUMDAR:
SHRI DIPANKAR
MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry *vide* its notification No. S.O. 848(E) dated 26th July, 2004 has prohibited the employment of contract labour in the job of trolley retrieval by Airport Authority of India (AAI) in Delhi airport;

(b) if so, whether the order is being implemented; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and whether AAI had approached the High Powered Committee established by Government pursuant to order of the Supreme Court dated 11th September, 1991, before obtaining stay, if any, on the above notification?

Registered trade unions in Sikkim

1510. SHRI DIPANKAR
MUKHERJEE:
SHRI CHITTABRATA
MAJUMDAR:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether all statutory labour laws including Trade Union Act of registration are applicable in the State of Sikkim;

(b) if so, the number of trade unions registered in Sikkim; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Recruitment policy

1511. SHRI N. K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government Departments and cosy undertakings usually inform the vacancies and recruit the staff through the Employment Exchange of State Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the usual practice followed by the Central Government Departments therefor;

(c) whether any change has been effected for the recruitment policy of various Government agencies and Departments;

(d) whether Government consider to notify the Central Government vacancies having contract nature to the concerned State Government Employment Exchanges and observe a transparent recruitment procedure; and

(e) Government's reaction thereto?

Interest rate on EPF

1512. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of interest on EPF has been ratified by the Finance Ministry for year 2001 to 2004;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ratified rates of interest are as per the recommendations of EPF Board/Labour Ministry; and

(d) if not, the action proposed to be taken by the Ministry in this regard?

Setting up of new ITIs

†1513. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals received so far from State Governments for the upgradation of ITIs as per the announcement made by Honourable Prime Minister with regard to upgradation of 500 ITIs;

(b) whether Government of Himachal Pradesh has also requested to upgrade certain ITIs of the State;

(c) if so, when such request was made; and

(d) the target in terms of numbers fixed for setting up of more new Industrial Training Institutes during the current Five Year Plan?

Vacancies in labour courts

1514. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases under Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, pending in courts upto level of Sessions Courts as on 30th June, 2004, State-wise;

(b) the number of cases which have been pending for (i) more than five years but less than ten years and (ii) for more than ten years, State-wise;

(c) whether there are a large number of vacancies in labour courts for which cases have been lingering on for years; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to fill vacant posts in courts and the other steps proposed to get the cases expedited?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.