

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the April 18, 2002/ Chaitra 28, 1924 (Saka)*

(Ministries: Prime Minister; Agro and Rural Industries; Atomic Energy;
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

Promotion of coir industry in Andhra Pradesh

2614. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey about the units of coir industry in Andhra Pradesh and the number of workers working therein;

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

(c) whether Government have any action plan to develop and promote coir industry in Andhra Pradesh which has adequate potential in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, whether Government would formulate such a plan?

Margin Money Scheme for setting up agro based and other rural industries

2615. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have launched

a margin money scheme for setting up agro based and other rural industries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of SSI units set up under the scheme, State-wise, as on the 31st December, 2001 with particular reference to Andhra Pradesh;

(d) the type of industries covered under the scheme; and

(e) the amount allocated and spent under the scheme till date?

Setting up of Advisory Committees

†2616. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various Advisory Committees under his Ministry have not been set-up so far;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when Government would set-up such Advisory Committees?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Applications under PMRY in Jharkhand

2617. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications received by Government from Jharkhand under the Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana during 2001-2002;

(b) the targets fixed and achieved under PMRY in the State;

(c) whether Government are satisfied with these targets; and

(d) if not, the corrective steps taken in this regard?

Applications for allocation of funds under PMRY in Bihar and Jharkhand

†2618. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the district-wise allocation of funds to Bihar and Jharkhand during the last two years under the Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana;

(b) the number of applications submitted in the banks under the said scheme in these States togetherwith the number of beneficiaries; and

(c) Government's future plans in the direction of providing more benefits to educated unemployed youths?

Training of teachers of TIFR

†2619. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tata Institute of

Fundamental Research has received any proposal from the Government of Chhattisgarh with regard to training of science and mathematics teachers of primary to higher secondary level;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken thereon;

(c) the other States where such schemes have been implemented; and

(d) the details of the achievements of the scheme during the last three years?

Safety of food stuff

2620. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how much food stuff (quantity and money-wise) have been saved from perishing by using the Atomic Energy Department's services during the year 2000-2001;

(b) the locations of these services;

(c) the food items exposed to radiation; and

(d) the elongated shelf life of these items?

Modernisation of postal services

2621. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring forward shortly a bill to modernise postal services in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposed law has been designed to take care in improving the quality of services and make them more consumer

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

friendly and relevant to the needs and aspiration of the people;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when the new law is likely to be put in place?

Invitation of I.T. companies for investment in Germany

†2622. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Germany has invited the Indian Information Technology companies to make investment there;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any action in this regard so far;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Confirmation of postal employees

†2623. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to confirm some postal employees;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any steps in this regard; and

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

Telecom services in Ferozepur and Faridkot districts

†2624. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government so far to improve rural telecom services in Ferozepur and Faridkot districts in Punjab;

(b) whether there is any proposal to introduce mobile telephone services in these districts; and

(c) if so, by when these are likely to be introduced?

Status of Post Offices in Punjab

†2625. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the status of Post Offices in Punjab;

(b) whether every village of the State has facility of Post Office;

(c) if not, the number of the villages in each district not having any facility of Post Office; and

(d) the details of the steps taken by Government to enhance postal services and cover all villages in the State?

E-billing services through post office

2626. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a scheme has been formulated to provide e-billing services through the post offices in some selected cities on experimental basis:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the extent to which the select post offices have been computerised and can render efficient service; and

(c) the details of the phased plans drawn up for computerisation of the post offices across the country and the programmes finalised, if any, to meet the training needs of the employees who would increasingly handle various e-services in course of time?

**Quality standard Guidelines for I.T.
Enabled Services**

2627. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Standardisation Testing and Quality Certification Core Team is working on a set of quality standard guidelines for the Information Technology Enabled Services;

(b) if so, the details thereof with its present status; and

(c) the details of the private sector experts and leaders in Information Technology associated with the team to take advantage of their rich experience?

**Shifting of Lower Koti branch post
office**

†2628. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to upgrade Lower Koti branch post office into a departmental sub post office which comes under district Shimla;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Interests of I.T. workers in U.K.

2629. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted by a trade body of U.K. on the Indian Information Technology workers;

(b) whether it is a fact that the U.K. based Indian Information Technology workers are worried over the trend of 'Indians go home' in U.K.; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to safeguard their interests in U.K.

Software exports

2630. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that software exports came down after September 11, 2001 terrorist attack in America;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what was the impact of such sudden slump in software exports on our domestic market; and

(d) the efforts taken by Government to improve software exports?

**Telephone services by BSNL in rural
areas**

†2631. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have provided an amount of Rs. 800 crore to

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

BSNL which is providing telephone service in rural areas, for not completing the work;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the measures being taken by Government to connect rural areas with telecommunication service and to provide better service; and

(d) the part of population of the country, connected with the telephone facilities, so far together with the areas still deprived of it?

Growth in I.T. Enabled Services

2632. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Information Technology services are set to register growth in the current fiscal year and if so, to what extent;

(b) whether according to NASSCOM there would be a projected shortage of qualified Information Technology professionals in 2004-2005 with demand peaking at 14,08,000 and supply lagging behind at 8,75,000;

(c) whether out of 1.6 lakh engineers who qualify every year in Information Technology field, only less than 2 per cent come from premier Information Technology Institutions; and

(d) if so, whether Government would strengthen the Information Technology base of educational Institutions, polytechnics and ITIs which together turn out the rest?

Cable theft

†2633. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several cases

of cable theft come into light day to day;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to take any concrete steps to check the same; and

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

Cyber crimes

2634. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Cyber crimes are increasing on a rapid pace;

(b) if so, how many such cases were reported during the last year;

(c) what action is being contemplated against such crimes;

(d) whether Government are planning to impose heavy penalties and imprisonment of the people involved in such Cyber crimes; and

(e) if so, by when it is likely to be implemented?

Default in payment of telephone bills

2635. SHRI K.M. KHAN:
SHRI SANTOSH
BAGRODIA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of telephone subscribers have defaulted in payment of telephone bills to MTNL & BSNL;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the outstanding dues which are to be recovered from the defaulters as on 31st December, 2001 Category-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) whether MTNL/BSNL have written off arrears of telephone bills in certain cases;

(e) if so, the number of such cases where arrears were written off; and the amount written off; and

(f) the guidelines, if any, for writing off the arrears?

Setting up of a telecom financing corporation

†2636. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the working group on the Tenth plan has suggested that Government should consider setting up of a telecom financing corporation to ensure cheaper financial assistance for the equipment manufacturers and operators;

(b) if so, whether the Group has also recommended a ten year tax holiday to the existing and new telecom equipments manufacturers;

(c) whether Government have considered the suggestions made in the report; and

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

Shortage of linemen in Mainpuri district

†2637. SHRI D.P. YADAV:
SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there is shortage of official linemen in Mainpuri district;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the general public have to suffer as a result of the shortage of linemen to mend the telephones;

(d) whether Government are considering to depute more linemen in the district; and

(e) the other steps Government have taken to resolve the problem?

Waiting list for telephone connections in Tamil Nadu

2638. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of waiting list for telephone connections in Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu;

(b) by when such waiting list would be cleared;

(c) whether any new exchanges are proposed to be opened in Sivaganga district;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Enhancement of rental and reduction in free calls

2639. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have enhanced rental and reduced the number of free calls to commercial subscribers from 1st April, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government still propose to increase rental as the present telephone tariff is even now subsidized; and

(d) if so, what are Government's plans?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Release of commemorative stamp

2640. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would issue a commemorate stamp in the memory of Shri P.S. Varier, the founder of 'Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala' during the centenary celebrations of this firm in 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for delay in this regard; and

(d) the details of the proposed time-frame of the issue of the stamp?

Regulation of courier operators

2641. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUK-KARASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring amendments in the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 and Sea Customs Act to bring Private courier operators under these regulations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Private Courier Operators are regulated by any other legislation at present;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Postal Department is facing challenge from private courier operators; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the department. to meet the challenge?

V.P.T. by private basic services operators

2642. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUK-KARASU: Will the Minister of

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has received a request for help from the private basic service operators in fulfilling Village Public Telephone;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

Failure of Garuda cellular phone service

2643. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL's cellular phone service "Garuda" has been found to be most unsuccessful as reported in the 'Hindu' dated the 28th March, 2002;

(b) if so, whether the private cellular phone companies are providing much better service than that of MTNL;

(c) if so, the facts thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the MTNL to adopt the latest technologies in its cellular phone services?

Clearance of waiting list

†2644. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that a number of districts of Uttar Pradesh have failed to clear the waiting list upto March this year due to negligence of the officers;

(b) the district-wise target fixed last year for clearing waiting list;

(c) the district-wise details of the pending waiting list;

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) the details of the waiting list upto March in Mainpuri district; to what extent it has been cleared; the target for clearing the remaining waiting list; the steps taken to clear the list; and

(e) whether any responsibility has been fixed for this negligence; the action taken, if not, the reasons therefor?

Transfer of Accounts Officers

†2645. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of such Accounts Officers of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., Delhi and Mumbai who have been working in the same office/building for five and ten years while holding different posts;

(b) the reasons for not complying transfer orders by Government in the case of said officers; and

(c) by when as per transfer rules, all the Accounts Officers would be transferred?

Telecom network in Tamil Nadu

2646. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the density of telecom network in Tamil Nadu, district-wise;

(b) how many remote areas are still waiting to be connected by telephones;

(c) what action is being taken to make the State fully connected by telecom network; and

(d) by when it is likely to be completed?

Rush in deposit of telephone bills in Mainpuri district

†2647. SHRI GHANSHYAM
CHANDRA KHARWAR:
SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the people of Manipuri district have to face a lot of rush in depositing their telephone bills due to negligence of top official there;

(b) if so, whether it is mandatory to deposit the bills at a particular place in Manipuri and the post offices do not accept such bills; if so, the justifications therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to make provisions for depositing such bills in the post offices with a view to resolve the problem;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) the steps, if any, taken for resolving the problem; and

(g) whether Government propose to take stringent action against the erring officials?

Connecting villages with wireless telephones

†2648. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any plan for connecting villages with wireless telephones during the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details of the villages which are being connected with this facility, State-wise, District-wise; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Vulgar chat boxes and sites

† 2649. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS
AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards a news-item captioned "Cyber Sex Ki Mahammari Mein Badal Rahi Hai Computer Kranti" published in Rashtriya Sahara dated 30th January, 2002 which says that use of sensual and vulgar chat boxes and sites is rapidly increasing in India as a result of which disorder is increasing in the Indian society; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to have a check on vulgar chat boxes and websites?

Cellphones pre-paid cards buyers

2650. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are unable to get exact details of the cell-phones pre-paid cards buyers; and

(b) if so, what corrective steps are being taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

National Telecom University at Hyderabad

2651. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

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

(a) whether any request from Government of Andhra Pradesh has been received for establishing a National Telecom University at Hyderabad;

(b) if so, when such a request was received in his Ministry; and

(c) what action has been contemplated thereon?

Operation of INSAT-3C Satellite

2652. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether INSAT-3C Satellite is fully operational for satellite phone scheme;

(b) if so, the details of facilities available through the satellite; and

(c) by when the satellite phone would be made available to public?

Post Offices in AP

2653. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

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

(a) the number of villages that are covered by Post Offices in Andhra Pradesh, district-wise;

(b) whether any norms have been specified for opening up of a new Post Office in a village; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Postal tariff hike on books

2654. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI:
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government would agree to roll back postal tariff hike on books; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Quota for providing telephone connections in Mainpuri

†2655. SHRI GHANSHYAM
CHANDRA KHARWAR :
SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV :

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

(a) whether quota of providing telephone connections as per target has not been completed by March in Mainpuri due to negligence of the present Telecommunication Manager, Mainpuri;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether even the work of laying of cable has not been completed in time;

(d) the number of contracts awarded during the last two years, date-wise, the works which have been completed during the stipulated period, alongwith those which have not been completed in time;

(e) the justifications for not undertaking the job; and

(f) the action being taken by Government in this regard?

Contract for cable laying in Mainpuri

†2656. SHRI GHANSHYAM
CHANDRA KHARWAR :
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI :

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

(a) the number of contracts for laying cable awarded during the last three years in district Mainpuri;

(b) the details thereof;

(c) the number of contracts under which

work related to laying of cables has been completed as per prescribed time schedule and the contracts under which laying work has been completed after expiring of time schedule;

(d) the amount paid for said contracts, separately, indicating the depth; and

(e) the action taken against the contractors who completed the work after prescribed time schedule; if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor?

Impact of Internet Telephony

2657. SHRI RAJU PARMAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have made any study of the impact of Internet Telephony and obtained information from developed countries where these services have already been introduced;

(b) if so, whether according to this study the share of Internet Telephony in total telephone services in advanced countries does not exceed five to seven per cent; and

(c) whether Government propose to implement the recommendations received from TRAI without any further delay and if not, the reasons therefor?

TRAI's recommendations for internet telephony

2658. SHRI BHAGATRAM
MANHAR :
SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV :

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Telecom (DoT) had on October 4,

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

requested the Telephone Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to send their recommendations for introduction of Internet Telephony in India;

(b) whether the DoT have received any report from TRAI, and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the TRAI recommended a time bound plan to introduce Internet Telephony and if so, what action has been taken or propose to be taken by Government for implementation of TRAI recommendations; and

(d) whether Government would fix a time schedule for implementation of these recommendations?

Internet Telephony

2659. SHRI BHAGATRAM
MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR :

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) held open sessions to elicit public opinion before formulating its recent recommendations to Government on introduction of Internet Telephony in India;

(b) if so, what were the suggestions received from the public/Institutions;

(c) whether Government are under pressure now to put the recommendations on their Website to elicit public opinion once again; and

(d) if so, whether the repeat of this process would cause further delay in implementation of TRAIs recommendations, and if so, what steps Government propose to take to avoid these delaying tactics ?

Misuse of cyber cafes

2660. SHRI B.J. PANDA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the cases detected against misuse of cyber cafes as per the Information Technology Act, 2000 in cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai in the calendar year 2001 for publication in the electronic form the material of "lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest" nature;

(b) what action have been initiated and whether license of any Internet Service Provider has been withdrawn because of this; and

(c) whether any PIL is initiated on this issue and if so, the details thereof?

Investment in Bangalore Satellite Earth Station

2661. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the money invested in Bangalore Satellite Earth Station, not at present in use by C.DoT, Bangalore for providing satellite phone service;

(b) the reasons for not using the facilities; and

(c) the plan proposed to revive this and put to use?

Telephone under OFC system in Chhattisgarh

†2662. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(a) the number of telephones provided in rural areas through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) system under Chhattisgarh telecom circle;

(b) the number of villages of Chhattisgarh which have been selected for telephone connections after laying of underground cable in rural areas;

(c) the number of villages which have actually been connected to cable system; and

(d) the details of the villages of Jashpur district which have been connected to cable system?

Status of manufacture of satellite phone terminal

2663. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) what is the status of manufacture of satellite phone terminal in India, for which C-DoT acquired technology from USA;

(b) the money spent on this, so far; and

(c) the utility achieved through this investment or how it is to be utilised?

Guidelines for Diamond Certification

2664. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any guidelines on Diamond Certification;

(b) whether Government consider it necessary to make Diamond Certification compulsory; and

(c) if not, whether Government would take-up the issue in the interest of customers?

Handing over FCI godowns to private sector

2665. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to hand over the existing godowns of FCI to the private sector to improve its overall working in the era of privatisation;

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

(c) whether the storage facilities and capacities of the godowns of FCI in each State, in general and Tamil Nadu, in particular, are adequate to take care of the foodgrains stock;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Allotment of foodgrains to Andhra Pradesh

†2666. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have provided the allotted foodgrains in one lot inspite of better crop in Andhra Pradesh and inspite of sufficient foodgrain stock available with the State Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) its likely effect on the farmers in the State;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the local farmers would be exploited and have to suffer heavy losses as a result of arrival of large quantity of foodgrains on fair price shops; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Procurement of foodgrains by States

2667. DR. (MS.) P. SELVIE DAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of foodgrains procured and to be procured under Minimum Support Price Policy (MSP) in various States during Kharif marketing seasons 2001-2002 and 2002-2003;

(b) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has asked respective State Governments to procure and distribute foodgrains under its public distribution system; and

(c) if so, the amount allocated to various States for the losses incurred by them in procurement and distribution handling?

Decentralisation of procurement scheme

2668. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether many States still refuse to adopt the procurement decentralisation scheme which costs the Centre dearly on food subsidy bill;

(b) whether these States extract procurement taxes from FCI;

(c) whether Abhijit Sen panel has recommended doing away the practice of FCI acting as a conduit for transferring Central resources to States; and

(d) whether acceptance of such recommendation would yield a saving of more than Rs.1000.00 crores on FCI procurement costs?

Storage capacity of FCI

2669. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether 1/3rd of the world's wheat and 1/4th of rice buffer stocks are held by India;

(b) whether 6.7 million tonnes of foodgrains are still stored in the open by FCI;

(c) what is the storage capacity held by FCI and its hired capacity (those of State/central warehousing corporations/NAFED etc.); and

(d) what is the buffer foodgrains stocks with FCI at present?

Export of surplus foodgrains

†2670. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the foodgrains storage presently available in India;

(b) whether Government are contemplating to export surplus foodgrains; and

(c) if so, the details of surplus foodgrains and their annual upkeep?

Import of edible oil

†2671. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to abolish the Essential Commodities Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether there is a proposal of heavy investment on the import of edible oils; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the domestic production of edible oils?

Storage in open godowns

†2672. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Food Corporation of India has stored wheat, rice and paddy in open godowns;

(b) if so, the storage capacity of open godowns from April, 1999 to March, 2002; and

(c) the average quantity of foodgrains stored therein?

Increase in food subsidy

†2673. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that amount of food subsidy has increased from March, 1998 to March, 2002;

(b) if so, the amount given by Government to Food Corporation of India for the year ending March, 1998; and

(c) the projected amount of subsidy for the year ending March, 2002?

Change in prices of foodgrains

†2674. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

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

(a) whether Government have increased

and decreased the prices of foodgrains being sold through the Public Distribution System from March, 1998 to March 2002;

(b) if so, the instances when prices were increased and decreased alongwith increase and decrease thereof, separately; and

(c) the reasons for increasing and decreasing the prices time and again?

Purchase centres of FCI

†2675. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Food Corporation of India has established purchase centres for purchasing foodgrains;

(b) the number of purchase centres operating in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh from April to July, 2001; and

(c) the number of purchase centres operating in the above States from April to July, 2002?

Wastage of foodgrains

†2676. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

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

(a) whether it is a fact that foodgrains are wasted during the process of keeping the foodgrains in the godowns of Food Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the foodgrains wasted during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 in these godowns, year-wise; and

(c) the loss in terms of rupee?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Allocation of foodgrains for TPDS in A.P.

2677. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the difference in number of BPL families in Andhra Pradesh for Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) still persists between the Central and State Governments;

(b) what efforts were made to sort out the differences;

(c) the reasons for not allocating foodgrains demanded by the State for TPDS when Godowns of FCI are overflowing and foodgrains are rotting there; and

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

Farward trading in agricultural products

†2678. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some agriculture experts have demanded for starting forward trading in agricultural products in a recently held meeting with the Finance Minister so that seven per cent growth rate in agriculture sector can be achieved;

(b) if so, the names of the agricultural products for which forward trading is allowed at present and the items for which agriculture experts have put a demand for inclusion thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction in this regard?

Free distribution of foodgrains to BPL families

†2679. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

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

(a) the quantity of foodgrains produced in the country during 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002;

(b) the up date position of foodgrains stock with Food Corporation of India and out of which the quantity of foodgrains likely to be perished;

(c) the details of the quantity of off take of foodgrains by the States under Public Distribution System during the last three years;

(d) whether Government have framed a policy to distribute the foodgrains free to the people living below the poverty line; and

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

Distribution of items of daily use through Fair Price Shops

2680. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a plan to introduce a scheme for regular distribution of 11 items of daily use through Fair Price Shops;

(b) if so, the items which are proposed to be distributed under the scheme;

(c) if not, by when the food items would be distributed through FPSs;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) whether these items would be distributed to all families both APL and BPL; and

(e) the amount sanctioned and spent, if any, under the scheme?

Rotten rice for Assam

2681. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food Corporation of India (FCI) has decided to send 50 thousand metric tons of rice from its depots in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan to Assam;

(b) whether this rice was procured three-four years ago and found to be rotten;

(c) whether the State Government has opposed this move of sending rotten rice to Assam; and

(d) if so, the decision taken by Government in this regard?

Hiring private parties for procurement of foodgrains

2682. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to hire private parties for foodgrain procurement;

(b) if so, reasons therefor;

(c) whether it would not interfere with FCI's mandate; and

(d) whether the role of FCI is sought to be limited to buffer stocking only?

New foodgrain policy

2683. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is seriously thinking of introducing a new foodgrain policy to replace the absolute outlived present policy;

(b) if so, whether any consultation has been carried out with the State Governments and others;

(c) if so, the details of such consultations;

(d) whether Abhijeet Sen Committee submitted its report on foodgrain policy;

(e) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Committee;

(f) if not, by when the Committee is going to submit its report;

(g) whether Government are thinking of giving direct income subsidy for farmers; and

(h) if so, the details of such proposals?

Clearing old stock of foodgrains

2684. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item which appeared in 'The Hindu' dated the 8th March, 2001, stating that 30 per cent of Food Corporation of India's (FCI) grain stock is between two and four years old and some of the grain is as old as sixteen years;

(b) if so, the details of the foodgrains stored alongwith the consequent year of stock as on date, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to clear the old stock of foodgrains?

Foodgrains management policy

2685. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new "Foodgrains Management Policy" is in the anvil of Government;

(b) whether there would be any modification in the present concept of fixing Minimum Support Price for foodgrains;

(c) whether there is any plan to involve private trade in food procurement alongwith cooperatives and other organisational bodies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Formulation of a long-term grain policy

2686. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

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

(a) whether the high level Committee for formulating a long term grain policy for the country has submitted its report; and

(b) if so, whether Government had approved its recommendations?

Quantity of damaged foodgrains

2687. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

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

(a) whether Government would examine

the quantity of foodgrains and its quality once in a year;

(b) if so, the findings during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) how much quantity of foodgrains got damaged or deteriorated during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002?

Decontrol of sugar

2688. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are planning to decontrol Sugar from PDS;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted any study to know whether the Sugar Industry and Sugarcane growers would be benefited by this move; and

(c) whether Government are aware that in Karnataka thousands of tones of Sugar has been stored in godowns for sale; if so, in what way Union Government propose to help the State in clearing the stocks?

Decentralisation of procurement of foodgrains

2689. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a resolution unanimously urging the centre to drop the proposal to decentralise the work relating the procurement of foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether a copy of the resolution has been received by his Ministry;

(c) the detailed agreements put forward in favour of the demand; and

(d) Government's reaction thereto?

Amendment in Consumer Protection Act

2690. 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 Government propose to bring out some important amendments to the Consumer Protection Act currently in force;

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

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the amendments have been opposed by an important section of lawyers' lobby;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether these objections would be taken into consideration before bringing forward the amendment bill and if not, the reasons therefor?

Purchasing power of poorest among poor

†2691. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that there are a number of such persons among very poor people who are not even able to purchase subsidised foodgrains; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Failure of PDS

2692. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Distribution System conceived during perpetual food deficiencies period has now lost it relevance;

(b) if so, whether Government are thinking of any other such mechanism where economically weaker consumers are not adversely affected farmers interests are not jeopardized and the element of subsidies is considerably reduced; and

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

Utilisation of food subsidy for storage of foodgrains

2693. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what was the food subsidy during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) how much of this subsidy as a percentage is utilized for storage of foodgrain, year-wise;

(c) what is the total foodgrains stock in Government godowns at present and the stock of wheat in particular; and

(d) what is the off take of wheat and rice in the first nine months of the financial year 2001-2002 and how it compares with the previous year?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Pension to legal heirs of FCI employees

2694. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the legal heirs of the Ex-servicemen who expired while in service of FCI are eligible for both contributory pension prevailing in FCI and the Military Family Pension;

(b) whether the Military authorities discontinue the military family pension if the legal heirs are in receipt of FCI contributory pension;

(c) whether Government would permit to exercise of option to avail better pension to those eligible for only one pension; and

(d) Government's reaction thereto?

Abolition of FCI

2695. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to 'ABOLISH' Food Corporation of India in the name of reforms;

(b) whether this proposal has caused confusion among farmers;

(c) whether any alternative system has been contemplated in the absence of foodgrains procurement system; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Withdrawal of orders issued under Essential Commodities Act

2696. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND

PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have decided to withdraw all orders issued by different States under the Essential Commodities Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for their withdrawal;

(d) whether the State Governments were consulted in this regard; and

(e) if so, the views of the State Governments thereon?

Pakistan's objection to Indo-Israel cooperation

2697. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have noticed that Pakistan has objected to defence cooperation between India and Israel;

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

(c) what has been Israel's response to Pakistan's objection?

Consulate of Gulf countries in Kerala

2698. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal to start a Consulate of Gulf countries in Kerala is pending;

(b) whether any representation/demand for the same has been received from Kerala; and

(c) the details in this regard and Government's reaction thereto?

Indo-US defence cooperation

2699. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN
AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent visit of the Prime Minister, talks were held for expanding defence cooperation between India and the US and establishing a new strategic framework;

(b) if so, the outcome of the talks; and

(c) the steps taken in pursuance thereof?

Third Mission in New York

2700. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN
AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up a Third Mission in New York; and

(b) if so, the constitution and functions thereof indicating the reasons for setting up the Third Mission?

Sale of minor girls of Afghan refugees

2701. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports in Washington Times that 5 to 17 year old girls of Afghan refugees are being auctioned off in the frontier areas of Pakistan to serve as prostitutes or live in servitude or join herms of the rich in west Asia;

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

(c) what steps Government propose to take at diplomatic level including SAARC to stop atrocities on women?

Discussion with Pak on security environment in South Asian sub-continent

2702. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in continuation of the talks between the Union Minister of External Affairs and the Pak Foreign Minister at the SAARC Summit in Kathmandu, the Pak Foreign Minister again discussed the security environment in South Asian sub-continent with the National Security Adviser of India in February first week; and

(b) if so, what precise issues were discussed there and what was the outcome thereof?

Allegations by Vice Consul Istanbul

2703. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Vice Consul in Indian Embassy, Istanbul, Turkey, has levelled serious allegations of corruption and other irregularities;

(b) if so, what is the nature of those allegations;

(c) whether Government have enquired into the said allegations if so, the finding thereof;

(d) whether Government propose to take some action against vice consul as well; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?