

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the July 24, 2003/Sravana 2, 1925 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions—155

PMRY in Assam

407. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the target set to generate employment opportunities under the Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana in the State of Assam during the last four years, year-wise; and

(b) the number of educated unemployed youths who have been benefited thereby in the State?

Exploration of mineral sand of Chavara in Kerala

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

(a) what is the latest position of the joint venture proposal in the public sector for the explorations of mineral sand of Chavara in Kerala in participations with NMDC, IRE and KSIDC;

(b) whether there is any proposal to disinvest the shares of NMDC and IRE; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and its impact on the proposed new joint venture public sector project of synthetic rutile plant in Chavara?

Approval for mining mineral sand

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

(a) whether the State Government of Kerala has recommended any application of Kerala Rare Earths Minerals Ltd. seeking approval for mining mineral sand in the coastal area of Alappuzha district in Kerala to the Central Government;

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

(c) whether any authentic study has been conducted on the environmental impact of mining of beach sand minerals in the coastal area of Alappuzha; and

(d) if so, the details of the study report?

Irradiation technique for food processing

410. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether irradiation technique is useful and cheap for food processing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to set up irradiation facilities in Southern States particularly in Andhra Pradesh; and

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

Waiting list of telephone connections in Karnataka

411. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of people in the waiting list for telephone connections in Karnataka as on June, 2003, district-wise; and

(b) by when these people are likely to be provided with telephone connections?

Telephone subscribers in Delhi

412. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

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

(a) whether subscribers of mobile telephones run by private companies in Delhi are more than that of MTNL's landline connections;

(b) whether subscribers are surrendering landline telephones in a large number and switching over to mobile phones because of MTNLs' poor and costly services; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

C.A.G. report on telephone system in rural areas

†413. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has, in its recent report, criticized Government for unsatisfactory telephone system in the rural areas;

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

(c) whether Government have taken any action for redressal of objections raised in the report; and

(d) if so, the details of the action taken thereon?

Privacy laws

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

(a) whether Government are aware that cell phone location-services raise privacy concerns;

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

(c) whether there are any specific privacy laws in India through which phone data can be obtained by people not entitled to access; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

CAG report and unused telecom equipment

415. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent CAG report stating that telecom equipment worth Rs. 100 crores are lying unused;

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

(c) whether Salem — Coimbatore route was not commissioned because of defective microwave equipment;

(d) if so, the action taken to rectify it;

(e) whether certain equipment was purchased while there was no requirement; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken to fix the responsibility?

Supply of mobile set to landline subscribers

†416. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL proposes to provide a mobile telephone set through MTNL to all its subscribers in Delhi having fixed telephone connections at present; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Telephone facilities

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are determined to provide telephone facilities

in each and every village and toward this objective it is expanding telecom services fast;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that a decision has been taken at highest level to put a ban on the installation of telephone exchanges in rural areas for providing telephone facilities; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Non-separation of accounts by B.S.N.L.

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) continues to have just one consolidated account for all its services despite TRAI's guidelines regarding separation of accounts;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken for separation of accounts; and

(d) by when, it would be made effective?

Closing down of Media Lab Asia Research Project

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to closedown the Media Lab Asia Research Project very soon;

(b) if so, the reasons for suspending the project;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government are considering to restructure Media Lab Asia Research Project instead of closing it down; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Failure of Sena Bhawan exchange

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the telephones of Parliament House, Ministers and Members of Parliament were out of order on the 5th June, 2003 due to failure of Sena Bhawan exchange;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to prevent the recurrence of such incident in future?

Procurement of equipment by BSNL without open tender

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

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. proposes to procure equipment for three million lines without an open tender;

(b) whether the BSNL has chosen to procure the equipment from existing vendors like Motorola, Ericsson and ITI-Lucent through repeat order limited tender;

(c) whether the BSNL had found these companies involved in forming a cartel in 2001 when it had procured equipment for four million lines; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

Waiting list of telephone connections in Assam

422. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of consumers waiting for telephone connections under the Assam Telecom Circle;

(b) the reasons for non-fulfilment of demands of these consumers in the waiting list;

(c) how many WLLs are likely to be established within next three years and where would they be established; and

(d) whether it would be sufficient to cope with the waiting list problem?

Telephone facilities in the villages of Gujarat

423. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of villages in Gujarat are still without a telephone facility;

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

(c) whether Government have chalked out any plans to cover all the villages in the State with public telephones; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Vidya Vahini Project

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

(a) whether it is a fact that "Vidya Vahini", a project to connect 60,000

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Government and Government aided Senior Secondary Schools all over the country through the Internet, has been launched recently;

(b) if so, the details of the project, including the financial allocations made for the purpose, State-wise;

(c) whether arrangements for providing the required number of suitably trained teachers and also for installation of the necessary hardware etc. in the large number of schools, have been made; and

(d) if not, the details of State-wise phased programme drawn up for the purpose?

Postal facilities in villages

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

(a) whether every village in the country is provided with post office;

(b) if so, the details of the village post office ratio;

(c) if not, how many villages are deprived of post office facility;

(d) whether Government have set up target to expand the post office network; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Rise of privacy concerns by cell phone location services

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

(a) whether Government are aware that cell phone location services raise privacy concerns as the cell-phone acts a tracker to monitor the movement of the user;

(b) what are the Indian Laws *vis-a-vis* Federal laws on the protection from the outrageous acts of the cell-phone location service; and

(c) what amendments in the Indian Laws are contemplated to ensure complete protection user privacy?

Backlog of connectivity in rural areas

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge backlog of connectivity in rural areas and BSNL is almost exclusively trying to address this challenge;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that following corporatisation, the BSNL is forced to shoulder a huge one-time expenditure on one-time settlement of retirement benefits of its employees as well as tax outgo as compared to the erstwhile DoT;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) Government's proposals to compensate the BSNL to overcome these losses and successfully face the challenge of rural connectivity?

I.T. revolution by 'Akshaya'

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

(a) whether a Government sponsored community campaign named "Akshaya" has brought Information Technology revolution in the socially and economically backward district of Malappuram (Kerala) and the Commonwealth Union has reportedly offered help;

(b) whether out of 30,000 IT-literate, now 60 per cent are over the age of 50 years; and

(c) if so, in what way Government propose to disseminate the IT revolution to backward districts in other States?

Non-functional telephone of Khirki Extension

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

(a) whether it is a fact that some lines of exchanges 2667 and 2668 of MTNL, New Delhi serving Khirki Extension area, have been switched to 2954;

(b) if so, the date from which transfer has taken place;

(c) whether it is also a fact that computer complaint service is not attending to the complaints of new numbers, if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether a large number of telephones in the area remained non-functional for more than seven days frequently during the current year; and

(e) if so, whether rental rebate to the affected subscribers has been allowed, where due, if not, the reasons therefor?

Complaint against telecom department

430. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been serious complaint against telecom department

regarding its equipment being purchased and lying unutilized and order being placed without any justification;

(b) whether this has resulted in wastage of public funds worth rupees hundreds of crores; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken thereon?

Status of India as Chip Design Centre

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

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

(a) whether it is a fact that India can become a Chip Design Centre in the world;

(b) if so, whether the country has enough Technical Talent to cater to the existing and future demand from the Industry; and

(c) if not, the steps being taken to make India as a Centre of Chip Designing?

Out of order mobile telephones in Uttaranchal

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

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that B.S.N.L's services in the State of Uttaranchal often remain out of order; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken to improve the quality of Mobile cellphone services in the State?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Telephone facilities in North-Eastern Region (NER)

433. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in North-Eastern Region where telephone facilities have not been provided so far, district-wise/ State-wise;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the number of villages where the aforesaid facilities proposed to be provided in North-Eastern Region during the current financial year?

Busy route of telephones

434. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether telephone users generally get "all lines in this route are busy" message during peak hours; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to solve this problem?

New US law to hit Indian firms

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

(a) whether Government are aware of some new US law that may hit Indian software companies;

(b) if so, the details of the law passed by the US Congress in this regard which would hamper the Indian software service

companies and their development in the United States;

(c) whether the matter has been taken up with the US Government and if so, the response of U.S. Government in the matter; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above is in negative, the reasons therefor?

Harassment of telephone subscribers

436. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been increasing volume of unsolicited telephone calls from telemarketing agencies and market research companies resulting in harassment and infringement of privacy of individual subscribers;

(b) whether as a consumer protection measure Government propose to evolve a mechanism to keep the individual phones out of bounds for such callers; and

(c) if so, the details of such protective measures proposed therefor?

Storage and transit loss of foodgrains

437. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the losses, during storage/transit, suffered by Government due to prevailing irregularities in the Food Corporation of India during the last three years, year-wise; and

(b) the responsibility fixed and the action taken to minimise the losses?

Storage of foodgrains in plastic bags

438. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

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

(a) whether Government propose to direct IGMRI, Hapur to conduct a six year study to find out the suitability of plastic bags for storage of wheat and rice, since wheat and rice are stored beyond six years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the duration of the current study being conducted by IGMRI to study suitability of plastic bags for storage of cereals; and

(d) the details of the study conducted by IGMRI, Hapur under various climatic and weather conditions and various combinations of these conditions?

Disposal of old foodgrains

†439. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

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 and Central Warehousing Corporation have been instructed to dispose off the foodgrains lying there for more than three years within the next two months;

(b) if not, by when the direction would be issued;

(c) the quantity of foodgrains lying with these two Corporations item-wise; and

(d) if these foodgrains could not be disposed off, the manner in which the same would be saved from rotting or getting

spoiled and how the additional capacity for storage would be created?

Shortcomings in PDS

440. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

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

(a) whether the States have been asked to remove the shortcomings of Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, whether he has ruled out any possibility of structuring Food Corporation of India;

(c) whether the Prime Minister had also called a meeting of the Chief Ministers and other National Leaders to discuss Public Distribution System issue;

(d) if so, to what extent he has taken steps to remove shortcomings of PDS which has failed to reach the people below the poverty line; and

(e) the help and assistance to States which the Centre has approved for successful implementation of PDS?

Search for new markets by Indian sugar exporters

441. DR. A.R. KIDWAI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

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

(a) whether despite the global slump, Indian sugar exporters are in search of new markets;

(b) if so, whether these exporters have tapped new market in Georgia to which sugar has been exported and negotiations are on for more exports;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the Countries to which sugar is being exported;

(d) the total sugar exported to Georgia during the last six months; and

(e) to what extent exporters have succeeded in tapping the foreign market?

Expansion of Antyodaya Anna Yojna

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

(a) whether a massive expansion of Antyodaya Anna Yojna is being implemented in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the existing population under BPL in Himachal Pradesh;

(c) whether the scheme has so far been fully implemented to help the families living below poverty line in the State; and

(d) if so, the details of expansion programmes being considered in this regard?

Pesticides in mineral water and aerated drinks

443. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 4519 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 5th May, 2003 and state:

(a) the present status of revision of existing standards of pesticides residues in packed drinking water and mineral water;

(b) whether Government also propose to collect samples of popular brands of aerated soft drinks in order to detect the presence of harmful pesticides in them and its effect on the consumers in view of

the fact that the manufacturers utilise the same water as that of packaged drinking water and mineral water for the production of the popular brands of aerated soft drinks;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Sugar mills in current crushing season

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

(a) the number of sugar mills which have started sugar production during the current crushing season;

(b) the number of sugar mills which are closed at present, State-wise;

(c) the details of the corrective steps taken to restart these mills, State-wise; and

(d) the target of production of sugar fixed for current crushing season?

Transit and storage loss of foodgrains

†445. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1588 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 6th March, 2003 and state:

(a) whether the issue of adopting any other method for fixing responsibility for setting up reliable mobile weighing bridges and in the matter of transit losses has been settled between FCI and the Railways;

(b) if so, the final outcomes thereof; and

(c) in what way the FCI propose to minimise its transit and storage losses?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Supervision of PDS in Orissa

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

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

(a) whether a Central Team has visited various parts of Orissa to supervise proper functioning of the Public Distribution System; and

(b) if so, the areas visited by the Team, shortcoming detected and the action taken to help the State to streamline the system?

Distress sale of paddy in Orissa

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

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

(a) whether Government are aware of the distress sale of paddy by poor farmers of Orissa;

(b) whether to control distress sale by farmers, the Centre has implemented "Rural Warehouses Schemes" (RWS);

(c) if so, the details of this project and how far this has helped the beleaguered farmers;

(d) the details of "Farmers Expansion Service Scheme" (FESS) project and how far this has helped the farmers of the State;

(e) whether the Centre has provided some compensation to those farmers who were compelled to distress sale of paddy;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

Foodgrain for drought affected States

448. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from the drought affected States for supply of foodgrains from the Central Pool; and

(b) if so, the quantity of foodgrains allotted by the Centre to the States which are severely affected by the drought?

Review of foodgrain export policy

449. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to review the foodgrain export policy;

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

(c) whether the new policy is likely to dispense with W.T.O. compatible subsidies being paid to the exporters of foodgrains; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Expenditure on food subsidy

450. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the expenditure on food subsidy reached a whopping amount of Rs. 27,800/- crores;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this amount includes the expenditure made for holding surplus food stocks;

(c) if so, the details of the food subsidy spent under various heads;

(d) whether Government are aware of the fact that even the free distribution of excess stock to the drought affected or needy would be cheaper than storing them; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken to avoid the wasteful spending on the storage of unnecessary food stocks?

Export of inferior quality rice

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India had given concession to the rice exporters in 2001, 2002 and 2003 assuming that the rice was of inferior quality;

(b) if so, the amount of losses suffered by the Food Corporation of India on account of extending such concession in each of the above years; and

(c) the exporters to whom such concession was given in each of the said year alongwith the amount of concession?

Export of rice by private parties

452. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India gave undue benefit of Rs. 455 crores in years 2001 and 2002 to private parties in the sale of rice for export by way of excess allowance for "brokens", without consulting the Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any responsibility has been

fixed for the alleged "irregular, injudicious and unwarranted" concessions as reportedly commented upon by the Minister itself;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the follow up action taken and its present status?

Stock of foodgrain with FCI

453. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the stock of rice and wheat with FCI at present;

(b) what is the capacity of FCI godowns; and

(c) the stock of rice and wheat kept in FCI godown that has been spoiled during the last two years, value-wise, quantity-wise, year-wise and commodity-wise figures thereof?

Wheat spoiled due to negligence

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

(a) whether lakhs of tonne of wheat has been spoiled due to the official negligence and is unfit for human consumption;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the officials responsible and the action taken against them; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to check the recurrence for such incidents in future?

Demand of rice by Tamil Nadu

455. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the demand made by the Government of Tamil Nadu to the Central Government for supply of rice to meet the drought situation;

(b) the total allocation made by the Centre to meet the situation; and

(c) the steps being taken to provide adequate stocks of rice to meet any eventuality?

Distribution of food items through fair price shops

456. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the foodgrains and other essential commodities now being distributed through fair price shops;

(b) the prices of these commodities in the fair price shops and also in the open market as on the 30th June, 2003; and

(c) the types of commodities and the quantity per head as are now being distributed to the BPL families along with the per kg. rates?

Import of Palmolien through STC

457. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ:
DR. A.K. PATEL:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question No. 332 given in Rajya Sabha on the 13th March, 2003 and state:

(a) whether Government have taken any

decision to permit the State Governments to import 18,000 tons of RBD Palmolien through STC with 45 per cent duty under the Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ); and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Export of wheat

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

(a) the names of countries to which Food Corporation of India has exported wheat during the last three years together with the quantity of wheat exported to each country and the price at which it was exported; and

(b) the details of price fixed by Food Corporation of India for export of wheat during the current financial year?

Transfer of funds to NLCPR

459. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to refer to answers to the Starred Question 678 dated 13th May, 2002, Unstarred Question 979 dated 27th February, 2003 and Unstarred Question 2056 dated 11th March, 2003 respectively given in the Rajya Sabha and state:

(a) the total amount of funds transferred to Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), amount released to the States of North Eastern Region as well as total amount and status of the unreleased amount, year-wise till March, 2003;

(b) whether separate Budgetary provision is required for utilizing this already transferred amount by the Department of Development of North Eastern Region; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the system of fund transfer and authorization given to the Department of Development of North Eastern Region?

Divesting stake in disinvested companies

460. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to divest its residual stake in several disinvested companies boosted by the success of the Maruti initial public offer; and

(b) if so, the Companies being considered for such disinvestment, its present percentage of holding and its value?

Policy of IPO for disinvestment

461. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to adopt the policy of issuing Initial Public Offer (IPO) for the disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings instead of the old method of strategic sale of equity shares; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the details of the IPOs proposed to be issued after the Maruti offer?

Disinvestment of PSUs

†462. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Public Sector

Undertakings disinvested so far and the purpose therefor;

(b) whether it is a fact that efforts are being made to sell Public Sector Undertakings on the prices lower than the actual prices;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to amend or improve the disinvestment process; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Privatisation of NALCO

463. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finally decided to privatise NALCO;

(b) if so, by when the process of privatisation of NALCO is likely to start through IPO;

(c) whether the Orissa Government, all Central Trade Unions and all political parties have unanimously opposed the privatisation of NALCO; and

(d) if so, the reasons for adoption of indifferent attitude by Government towards the wishes of the common people of Orissa in the matter?

Assistance for preservation of heritage structures in Iraq

464. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government assisted Afghanistan in the field of preservation of heritage structures and museums;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to provide similar assistance to Iraq as well; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Stand of International Community on Indo-Pak ties

465. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the stand taken by the International Community on the recent efforts made by both India and Pakistan to create better relations between the two;

(b) whether Government are satisfied by the stand taken by the International Community especially the Western Countries on matters to resolve Indo-Pak relations; and

(c) if so, to what extent keeping in mind the statement made by Prime Minister on his visit to UK in October, 2002 that "Western Countries were maintaining double standards on terrorism?

Five point agenda for peace initiatives between India and Pakistan

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

(a) whether Government have evolved a five point agenda as the basis of the new round of peace initiatives between India and Pakistan; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof?

Attitude of Pak President towards India

467. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI
BARUPAL:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether after meeting USA President, the President of Pakistan has changed his attitude towards India;

(b) if so, whether the President of Pakistan has assured total stoppage of infiltration and aid to extremists;

(c) whether India has rejected Pakistan's third party mediation on Kashmir issue, as proposed by the Pakistan President's to USA;

(d) if so, to what extent India has checked the situation about infiltration and Pakistan's involvement in dismantling training camps in both Pakistan and PoK;

(e) whether USA has provided financial aid and refused military aid to Pakistan; and

(f) if so, to what extent India has condemned this move?

Base camps of insurgent groups in Myanmar

468. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE:
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of insurgent groups operating in different North-Eastern States are having their base camps at Myanmar;

(b) whether Myanmar Government has been approached not to give shelter to these insurgent outfits in Myanmar; and

(c) if so, what has been the response from Myanmar?

USA's request for troops to Iraq

469. SHRI N.R. DASARI:
SHRI MURLI DEORA:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether USA has requested India for making available troops for Iraq;

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government thereon; and

(c) the Countries which are sending their troops to Iraq to stabilise post-war effect?

Bus service between Gangtok and Lhasa

470. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Sikkim has sent a proposal to start a bus service between Gangtok and Lhasa in view of the fact that border trade through Nathula Pass in Sikkim is proposed to be started; and

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

Sino-Indian rapprochement

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

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia has welcomed Sino-Indian rapprochement after the Prime Minister's visit to China;

(b) if so, whether India, China and Russia have now agreed to have a joint meeting to play a greater role in world affairs;

(c) if so, the main issues discussed in this regard by Government with China and Russia;

(d) to what extent all the three countries have agreed to implement the decisions taken; and

(e) whether all the three countries have now agreed to work together on economic, social and political issues jointly?

Caution to India on joining USA led force in Iraq

472. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has been cautioned that they should not join USA led force in Iraq;

(b) if so, whether all the opposition parties in India have intimated that any position contrary to the resolution of Parliament would be an "infringement of its privilege";

(c) whether Washington has offered India representation on a proposed joint task force to run the command-and-control structure of stabilisation forces;

(d) if so, whether India has accepted this demand; and

(e) whether some 20-29 countries have agreed to send the troops to Iraq for peace keeping including India?

Identification of issues for talks with China

†473. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether prior to the Prime Minister's China visit Government had identified such issues on which talks were to be held with the Chinese leaders;

(b) if so, the details of such issues; and

(c) the reasons for not including the issues like the occupation of Sikkim, occupation on the land of Arunachal Pradesh, China's view on Mac Mohan line, supply of arms to Pakistan by China, etc. in the talks?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Visit of US team to discuss sending troops to Iraq

474. DR. AKHILESH DAS:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during Deputy Prime Minister's visit to USA, it was decided that in view of the priority attached to the India's own defence needs, a US team would be sent to India to discuss the desirability and feasibility of sending a peace keeping force by India to Iraq;

(b) if so, whether such US team has since visited India; and

(c) the outcome of their visit, if any?

PM's comments on Indian troops for Iraq

475. DR. AKHILESH DAS:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister in his recent three nation tour of Germany, Russia and France at a Press Conference in Lausanne spelt out five questions that India expects to be answered before India could consider sending or not sending its troops for stabilisation process in Iraq;

(b) if so, what specific questions were posed that needed to be answered before consideration of the proposal; and

(c) what answers, if any, have been provided thereto?

Indian troops for Iraq

476. SHRI JIBON ROY:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the question of Indian troops to Iraq for helping establishment of transitional Government in Iraq and for setting up a democratically elected regime in that country;

(b) if so, the decision taken in the matter;

(c) the terms and conditions appended to the scheme;

(d) whether the scheme has the UN sanction;

(e) whether Indian troops if deployed would serve under American military command; and

(f) if not, the strategy worked out by Government in this regard?

Illegal immigration from Bangladesh

477. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a joint communique issued in 1992 Bangladesh had admitted that illegal immigration to India is a serious problem;

(b) whether India and Bangladesh have agreed to check the problem through establishing mechanism for a joint verification; and

(c) if so, the progress made in this regard?

Chinese response to cross-border terrorism

478. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government could arrange to elicit a response from China on cross-border terrorism during the recent visit by Prime Minister to that country;

(b) if so, the details of the response it received; and

(c) the steps being proposed to contain the cross-border terrorism with the active cooperation of China?

Supply of nuclear material by China to Pakistan

479. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have raised the question of the alleged supply of nuclear material by China to Pakistan during the recent visit of Prime Minister to that country;

(b) if so, the response thereto; and

(c) whether any proposals were considered for nuclear cooperation with China during the talks; if so, the details thereof?

Problems faced by Haj Pilgrims from Rajasthan

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

(a) whether it is a fact that due to lackadaisical attitude of the Central Haj Committee hundreds of pilgrims from Rajasthan who had gone for Haj this year are facing problems in getting the refund of the amount deposited by them earlier for

residential arrangements in Mecca in Saudi Arabia;

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating the total amount involved for reimbursement;

(c) the reasons for the delay; and

(d) the action contemplated by Government for expeditious settlement of the dues?

Proposal for a military field hospital in Iraq

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set up a 300-bed military field hospital in Iraq;

(b) if so, what would be the strength and composition of the Army Personnel deployed for manning the project;

(c) whether it would be a joint venture with Jordan;

(d) if so, the terms and conditions including revenue aspects, of this venture;

(e) whether the proposed Iraq Hospital Project would be under the overall supervision of the USA led forces in Iraq; and

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

Permanent US Army Base in India

482. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a statement made by US Defence Expert Jhon. E. Karloaf quoting a Pentagon report titled "Indo-US Military Relationship: Expectations and Perceptions";

(b) whether it is a fact that dialogue is going on between USA and India to allow USA of having a permanent Army Base in India; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Resuming dialogue with Pakistan

483. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has declared his intention to resume the process of dialogue in a bid to solve the outstanding issues between India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details of the declaration and the reaction of the Pakistan Government thereto;

(c) whether Government have drawn up any solution for resolving the vexed Kashmir issue pending for more than the last 50 years;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when the first meeting is likely to be held with Pakistani leaders?

Discussion on Sikkim and McMohan Line with Chinese leaders

484. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during his visit to China last month, the Prime Minister held discussions with the Chinese leaders on the question of Sikkim and McMohan Line;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Chinese leaders thereto; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Buses on Delhi-Lahore route

485. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to ply two new buses on Delhi-Lahore route;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the reasons for discontinuation of service earlier; and

(c) the precautionary measures taken by Government that terrorists do not infiltrate in the country and Pak Nationals leave the country on the expiry of their visa?

Sino-Indian differences on Sikkim

486. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sino-Indian differences exist over Sikkim and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the justification by China for objecting the joining of Indian Union by Sikkim in 1975;

(c) the effect of Chinese reluctance to recognise Sikkim as part of the Indian Union; and

(d) the efforts being made to resolve the boundary dispute with China which led to Chinese attack on India in 1962?

Consensus on Tibet in talks with China

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

(a) whether it is a fact that any new consensus has been reached between India and China on Tibet issue;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that Tibet refugees in India have opposed this new consensus?

Indian troops for Iraq despite UN disapproval

†488. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian troops are being sent to Iraq despite disapproval expressed by United Nations; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether there is any pressure from USA and the United Kingdom for the same; and

(c) the country which would bear the expenses in case India sends its troops to United Nations?

Resolution of outstanding issues with Pakistan

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

(a) whether it has been brought to Government's notice that Pakistan wants resolution of all issues with India but would not sideline the core issue of Kashmir; and

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

Release of Pakistani prisoners

†490. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Pakistani prisoners Government propose to release in exchange of 20 Indian prisoners released by Pakistan;

(b) the number of Indian prisoners released by Pakistan last time and the number of Pakistan prisoners released by India;

(c) the number of Indian prisoners in Pakistan at present and out of them, the number of Prisoners of War of 1971; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government for releasing of the said prisoners?

Discussion of Foreign Secretary regarding troops to Iraq

491. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's Foreign Secretary during his recent visit to Washington, met the US Deputy Secretary of Defence and the Deputy Secretary of State to discuss the American request of sending Indian troops as part of stabilisation force in Iraq;

(b) whether he pointed out to them various grey areas in the proposal including those in the UN resolution on the subject; if so, the details of the Indian concerns discussed and grey areas pointed out to them; and

(c) the US response thereto?

Assurance by US President to prevent infiltration

492. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
DR. AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent visit of the Prime Minister to Petersburg, the US President assured him to impress upon President of Pakistan to take effective steps to prevent infiltration by militants into J&K; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, what is Government's information regarding the steps taken to carry out the assurances in this regard?

Talks with China

493. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what new relations have been established with China through the Prime Minister's visit to that country;

(b) whether Government have accepted the sovereignty of China over Tibet; and

(c) whether our border problem with China is expected to be solved within a shorter time frame?

Invitation to Israeli PM to visit India

494. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an invitation has been extended to the Israeli PM to visit India;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of the date the invitation was extended;

(c) whether it is also a fact that India's National Security Advisor proposed a US-Israel-India alliance;

(d) if so, whether there is any shift from Government stand on West Asia; and

(e) the response of Government thereto?

India's stand on Tibet

495. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has changed its stand that the Autonomous Region of Tibet is now

recognised as a part of People's Republic of China;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, what stand was taken by India during the Prime Minister's recent visit to China?

Changes in visa rules by USA

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

(a) whether the U.S. Government has made visa rules more stringent this year resulting in delay in admission of the Indian students in American Universities;

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

(c) whether the revised visa guidelines would result in prolonged delay of the Indian students in reaching the campus; and

(d) if so, whether the matter has been taken up with the appropriate authorities for corrective action?

Bus service to Lahore

497. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to re-introduce Delhi-Lahore Bus service which was discontinued some time back;

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

(c) the response of passengers to this service;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government of Pakistan owes Rs. 25 lakh to the Delhi Transport Corporation and despite best

efforts it has not been possible to recover the amount; and

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

Global opinion against terrorism

†498. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether being the main promoter of peace in the world, Indian Government have taken any steps to generate world public opinion against the menace of global terrorism;

(b) if so, whether this matter has been discussed with China; and

(c) if so, the outcome thereof?

PM's visit to Europe

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

(a) what significant deliberations took place between the various Heads of the Countries during the Prime Minister's recent trip to Europe to improve India's point of view on the Kashmir issue with Pakistan; and

(b) what follow up action is being taken by Government on Prime Minister's point of view that trade barriers between the Countries be removed?

Membership of UN Security Council

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

(a) whether Government of Great Britain have declared their unequivocal support for India's claim for permanent Membership of

the expanded United Nations Security Council;

(b) the other countries who are staking their claim for a permanent seat in the expanded Security Council;

(c) what would be the total Membership of the expanded Security Council; and

(d) what steps India contemplate to achieve their goal of permanent membership of the Security Council?

Indian fishermen in Pakistani jails

501. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian fishing boats were captured in the Kutch sea by the Pakistani Marine guard recently;

(b) if so, whether according to the latest count, 319 Indian fishermen are languishing in Pakistani jails and 60 fishing boats, each worth Rs. 15 lakh are in their custody; and

(c) the details of efforts Government propose to make in order to bring the captured fishermen to their homeland?

UN peace keeping forces for Iraq

502. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UN Secretary-General has declined to send UN peace keeping forces in Iraq;

(b) if so, what reasons have been attributed therefor;

(c) the considerations that have promoted Government to consider US request for sending Indian forces to Iraq;

(d) whether any decision has been taken in the matter; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Offer of bilateral talks by Pakistan

† 503. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan has offered bilateral talks on the Kashmir issue with India by leaving its insistence of tripartite talks on the matter;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government in this regard?

Decision on sending troops to Iraq

504. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision on sending Indian troops to Iraq on the basis of the USA request;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the UN Security Council Resolution 1483 implies induction of Indian forces in Iraq to have an explicit UN mandate;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons for not rejecting the decision of sending troops outright?

Status of Security Council seat for India at UN

505. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is seriously lobbying for the seat at Security Council;

(b) if so, what is the present position

regarding our nomination to Security Council;

(c) whether it is a fact that Pakistan is severely opposing our candidature and is trying for its own entry;

(d) if so, what lobbying is being done by India with super powers to get an entry into Security Council; and

(e) by when it is likely to be decided about our nomination into the UN body?

Visit of National Security Advisor to New York

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

(a) whether India's National Security Advisor and Principal Secretary to Prime Minister visited New York few weeks ago;

(b) if so, whether he addressed a Jewish Organisation there;

(c) whether he suggested there that India, Israel and USA had some sort of an institutional arrangement/pact to share intelligence;

(d) whether this pronouncement had Government's approval; and

(e) whether this means a departure from our traditional policy in such matters?

Deals/MOUs with USA

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

(a) the details of the deals and Memorandum of Understanding entered into between USA and India during the visits to USA of dignitaries from India recently including the Prime Minister;

(b) the details of the talks with the USA in the recent past in regard to the wide

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

ranging areas to further our relationship with USA post Pokhran-II; and

(c) the response of the USA Government to Prime Minister and other dignitaries visits and the impending benefits to be reaped in this regard?

Resumption of air links with Pakistan

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

(a) whether there is a proposal to resume civil aviation links with Pakistan and where do the tech-level talks stand between the two countries; and

(b) the details of steps taken by Government to resume Lahore bus link and other pending matters between the two countries to give peace a chance?

Statement of Chinese Ambassador on PM's visit

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

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the recent statement of the Chinese Ambassador to India, the visit of Indian Prime Minister has yielded better than expected results that would go a long way to enhance the mutual trust and understanding between India and China and lead to a final settlement of the historical problem between the two Countries; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the agreement reached and expectations for the future of Sino-India relation?

US sanctions on China

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

(a) whether Government are aware that USA has imposed sanctions on China and Iran for ballistic missile cooperation which will deprive a large Chinese conglomerate of more than \$100 million exports to the USA;

(b) whether China has also been supporting Pakistan Nuclear and Missile Programme without similar action being taken against it; and

(c) if so, what steps Government are taking on this issue?

Incorrect depiction of Indian maps

511. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian maps wrongly depicted by various publications abroad and examined by the Policy Planning and Research Division of his Ministry during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the number of cases of incorrect depiction of the Indian Map registered during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the rectifications that have been carried out in the wrong maps?

Discussions on alternate trade and yatra routes with China

†512. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any discussion with regard to opening of alternate routes for the trade

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

purpose and Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra, have taken place between India and China during the Prime Minister's visit to China;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether China has agreed to India's request to allow Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra through alternate route also beside traditional route; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Indian joint ventures in Iraq

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

(a) whether it is a fact that USA and UK have approached India or *vice-versa* for setting up joint ventures in Iraq after the lifting of sanctions in Iraq;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have sought MFN status from the new Government in Iraq; and

(d) if so, the response of the Iraq Government?

Ties with Central Asian Republics

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have been able to reestablish its traditional ties with Central Asian Republics through the reopening of the Silk-Route;

(b) if so, the significant achievements made during the year 2002-2003; and

(c) the prospects envisaged during 2003-2004?

Humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan

515. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan is not allowing transit facilities to India to send humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan;

(b) whether Government propose to send assistance/material to Afghanistan *via* Iran's Bandar Abbas port;

(c) if so, how many days will it take to reach Afghanistan; and

(d) the nature of help India is sending to Afghanistan?

Time limit for issue of passports

516. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the time limit for issuing passports which does not require police verification such as minor or with verification certificates attached;

(b) whether it is a fact that due to malpractices in passport office, sometimes, time taken for passports not requiring verification is more than the one requiring verification;

(c) if not, the number of applications received during the week 2—6 June, 2003 at passport office Delhi for both the categories;

(d) the number of passports requiring verification prepared before passports not requiring verification during the said period; and

(e) the details of reasons in each of the case?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Newsitem regarding removal of Indian languages from South African curriculum

517. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the South African Government was planning to remove Indian languages like Telugu, Tamil, Gujarati etc. from the curriculum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken by Government to see that the people of Indian origin are not denied access to the language of the country of their origin;

(d) whether there is any scheme to propagate Indian languages in the countries where PIOs live in good number; and

(e) if so, the details of the scheme and the steps taken for the development of Indian languages?

Pacts on Indo-US co-operation

518. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and USA are going to sign pact on eighteen areas of co-operation;

(b) whether it also includes the pact on transfer of technology on hydrogen fuel;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other areas of proposed co-operation?

Germany's revised visa regime for I.T. professionals

519. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Germany has assured Government of India to liberalise access for Indian IT professionals under a revised visa regime; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Elimination of Child/bonded labour in NER

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

(a) whether any steps are being taken by Government to eliminate the child labour and bonded labour in NER, particularly in Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there are still child labourers and bonded labourers in some parts of NER; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to identify and rehabilitate them?

Educated/uneducated unemployed youth

521. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of educated and uneducated unemployed youth as on the 30th June, 2003 in the Country, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the number of unemployed youth in the Country is increasing year after year and the employment opportunities are decreasing consistently; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and whether Government have formulated any concrete scheme to provide employment to unemployed youth during the Tenth Five Year Plan period?

Poverty alleviation and employment generation

† 522. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a note on poverty alleviation and employment generation was sent to the Director General, I.L.O. wherein detailed opinion has been sought on various aspects of expected cooperation on the part of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the areas in which expected cooperation from India is possible?

Default in payment of interest on EPFO funds

523. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of organisations where the EPFO has invested its funds, have defaulted in the payment of interest;

(b) if so, the details of these organisations, investments made in each, interest due, actually paid and defaulted amount as on the 31st March, 2002 and 2003; and

(c) what steps are being taken for the recovery of the arrears?

Rationalisation of Labour Laws

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

(a) whether the Second Labour Commission's recommendations to "rationalise" labour laws for liberalisation are being processed and any time-frame has been evolved to conclude this exercise;

(b) if so, whether the views/opinions expressed in Indian Labour Conference and several seminars held during the last year, have been consolidated; and

(c) what are the salient features thereof having direct relevancy on Commission's recommendations?

Female employment

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

(a) whether fall in organised sector jobs has affected female employment;

(b) whether Government have taken initiatives to arrest the fall in female employment;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Unemployment due to liberalisation and Multi National Companies

† 526. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that every year 40 to 50 lakh persons are being rendered jobless due to the consistent liberalisation and entry of MNCs;

(b) whether it is also a fact that ten lakh and twenty thousand small scale companies are on the verge of closure due to the manufacturing of items by MNCs which were being manufactured by small scale industries;

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether it is also a fact that the workers are also being retrenched by the big companies; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by Government for the rehabilitation and redeployment of these workers?

Employment opportunities

†527. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that employment opportunities in organised sector have decreased during the preceeding years;

(b) if so, what had been the annual rate of decrease during the years 1998 to 2003;

(c) the names of industries where it had been maximum and minimum at a point of time; and

(d) what is the maximum and minimum rate thereof?

EPF interest rate

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

(a) whether the current EPF interest rate of 9.5 per cent is inclusive of a component of 'bonus interest' of 0.5 per cent;

(b) if so, whether this bonus interest is legally tenable to be paid;

(c) whether this additional 0.5 per cent as bonus interest would cause a shortfall of about Rs. 500.00 crore to the EPF kitty;

(d) if so, whether it is proposed to make up this deficit out of 'Contingency Reserves' of the EPF; and

(e) the accumulated contingency reserves on this account, as on date?

Rate of growth of employment

529. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of growth of employment in the country during the period 1987—1994 and 1994—2002, period-wise separately;

(b) whether it is a fact that the rate of employment growth is dwindling; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Child labour in industries

530. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the industries in which child labour is prevalent;

(b) the steps taken to prevent this practice; and

(c) the action taken against the industries employing child labour during the last three years including the current year?

Functioning of private placement agencies

531. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to regulate the functioning of the private placement agencies to decentralise the placement services by setting up area-wise centres for data collection of job vacancies and study the emerging pattern of job opportunities that are rapidly growing in the unorganised private and service sectors; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Labour laws

532. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Second Labour Commission's recommendations to rationalise labour laws for liberalisation has not made any progress for the last one year;

(b) whether the labour reforms with amendment to Industrial Disputes Act and the Contract Labour Act rate are also pending;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken to get them expedited?

Central fund for Unorganised Sector Labour Welfare

533. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to provide Rs. 1.000 crore towards the Central Fund for Unorganised Sector Labour Welfare including pensions;

(b) whether the State Governments would also be required to contribute towards this fund;

(c) if so, the ratio of the Central and the State contributions towards the fund; and

(d) the details in this regard?

Houses to cyclone-affected labourers of Gujarat

534. SHRI BACHANILEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that all those labourers who lost their houses in 1998 cyclone in Gujarat were promised to be given houses in Kutch district of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the number of houses proposed to be constructed for the purpose;

(c) whether it is a fact that progress made in the construction of houses is far below the satisfactory level;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to accelerate the construction work and by when all the affected labourers would be provided with houses?

Job seekers in Andhra Pradesh

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

(a) the number of job seekers on the live register of the employment exchanges in Andhra Pradesh as on the 30th June, 2003;

(b) the number of job seekers who are waiting for jobs for five years and more in such exchanges of the State;

(c) the number of job seekers provided with jobs through employment exchanges in the State during the last three years, year-wise; and

(d) the steps being taken to provide the jobs to the job seekers of the State within a time frame?

National Child Labour Projects

†536. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the name of various National Child Labour Projects being implemented in different States;

(b) the amount allocated for each of the projects during the last three years, State-wise and Union Territory-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government proposed to abolish the practice of child labour prevailing in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Social Security Scheme

537. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposed to bring a comprehensive Bill in order to provide Social Security Scheme Cover to agricultural and unorganised workers;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken care of the specific recommendations of the Second Labour Commission before drafting the Bill in this connection; and

(c) whether the Social Security Scheme Cover also include Employment Guarantee Scheme and Unemployment Allowance in the proposed bill?

Amendment in Payment of Bonus Act

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

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Payment of Bonus Act in order to waive limit of wages and quantum of bonus so that all the workers could get a share of profit in industries;

(b) if so, by when such a legislation is likely to be brought before Parliament; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Self-employment opportunities

539. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes of Government to give

self-employment opportunities to the unemployed youths;

(b) how many unemployed youths have been provided with self-employment opportunities during the last three years;

(c) whether these opportunities are proportionate to the birth-rate in the country; and

(d) if not, the results to be yielding in the long run?

Orissa development report

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

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that "Orissa Development Report" of Planning Commission has shown disturbing features relating to the economy of the State and has urged upon the State to correct their fiscal imbalance;

(b) the other salient features of the report and remedies suggested to boost economy; and

(c) the financial and other assistance given by the Centre to help the State to improve its fiscal position?

Centrally sponsored projects in Karnataka

541. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether plan allocation for Central sponsored projects has been reduced for the financial year 2003-04;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the projects likely to be effected by the reduced allocation particularly in Karnataka?

Span of Tenth Five Year Plan

542. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to reduce the duration of Tenth Five Year Plan from five years to three years; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

Downsizing Tenth Plan outlay

543. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR
REDDY:

SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to present a truncated Tenth Plan before the Parliament and the Country;

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

(c) whether the move has been cleared by the National Development Council; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Central Assistance for Madhya Pradesh

544. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Central Assistance to State Plans for the Ninth and the Tenth Plan (Projected) with increase in each case, State-wise;

(b) whether there is no real increase in the Central Plan Assistance so far as Madhya Pradesh is concerned;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) if so, reasons for inadequate increase?

Creation of one crore jobs

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have created one crore jobs each year during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details of jobs that have been created during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise; and

(c) what road map does Government have in order to create more jobs in 2003-04?

Special category status for Chhattisgarh

†546. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that some of the States have been placed in the special category for providing financial assistance;

(b) if so, the reasons for not including Chhattisgarh therein whereas this is a newly created poor and tribal dominated State; and

(c) whether Government propose to include this State in the special category in order to provide the financial assistance?

Special financial package for Bihar

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

(a) whether it is a fact that at the time of bifurcation of Bihar into two States, Government have to allocate special financial package for the State of Bihar; and

(b) if so, what amount has been provided on that account?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Grant under Central Road Fund for Rajasthan

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

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Rajasthan had proposed a revision in grant under Central Road Fund in August, 2002 as per the new guidelines for the projects approved and/or pending;

(b) if so, whether this proposal has been approved;

(c) if so, by when the revised grant would be allocated for the completion of pending projects and commencement of new projects already approved by the Central Government; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Roads in Rajasthan

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

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

(a) whether it is a fact that State Government of Rajasthan had proposed for 18 State roads as new National Highways;

(b) if so, whether Government have approved the said proposals;

(c) if so, by when the said roads would be officially declared as National Highways; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Collection of Toll tax

550. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that travellers are being burdened with development as well as maintenance of roads as they have to pay exorbitant toll tax on various Highways and Express Ways;

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to devise a method to collect reasonable toll tax on various Highways;

(c) whether Government have received number of proposals from various organizations urging to minimize the collection of toll tax; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

National Highways in Himachal Pradesh

551. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sanctioned any amount for construction and widening of various National Highways in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of funds likely to be released for the purpose?

Maintenance of National Highways

552. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of National Highways in the country and allocation made for their maintenance, widening and extension;

(b) whether there is any proposal to lay additional Highways;

(c) if so, details thereof with financial implications and time schedule;

(d) whether it is a fact that condition of many of the Highways is very poor; and

(e) if so, the details and rectification measures proposed to be taken in this regard?

National Highways in Kerala

553. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the roads of Kerala has been excluded from the Golden Quadrilateral road project;

(b) if so, the reason therefor;

(c) whether any steps would be taken for the conversion of the National Highways running through Kerala into four/six lane roads;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Road in Madhya Pradesh

554. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central India is one of the poorest beneficiaries of the major infrastructure project in the road sector funded by Petrol and Diesel Cess such as Golden quadrilateral and the East-West Corridor;

(b) the extent of coverage of Madhya Pradesh in the East-West corridors; and

(c) the reasons for not extending full benefit to Madhya Pradesh?

Funds from Central Road Fund

555. SHRI R. KAMARAJ:
SHRI THANGA TAMIL
SELVAN:

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

(a) the number of proposals received from the State Governments for releasing funds from the Central Road Fund;

(b) whether Government have cleared all the proposals;

(c) if so, the details thereof, along with the funds released so far, State-wise; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Conversion of roads into four-lane highways

†556. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to convert Delhi-Haridwar-Dehradun; Delhi-Kotdwar; Delhi-Kathgodam Highways into 4 lane highways under Prime Minister sponsored National Highway Project from the tourism point of view;

(b) if so, whether Government have formulated any concrete proposal in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Registration of vehicles

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

(a) whether Government propose to bring uniform registration of vehicles and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

driving licenses by issuing smart cards for the same;

(b) if so, by when Government propose to introduce the same;

(c) whether State Governments are ready to undertake the above exercise;

(d) what are the benefits of smart card for registration of vehicles; and

(e) the States that have already started this scheme?

Completion of National Expressway

† 558. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total proposed length of National Expressway;

(b) the number of phases in which it has been divided for completion;

(c) the amount estimated to be spent, phase-wise and under which Head the same would be drawn;

(d) the phase under which Expressway from Ahmedabad to Mumbai has been put and by when work would begin;

(e) the estimated length alongwith the amount estimated to be spent on it; and

(f) the cities with Headquarters to be connected by this Expressway?

Increasing road accidents

† 559. DR. PRABHA THAKUR : Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any increase

in the road accidents on the National Highways;

(b) if so, the details of road accidents occurred during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the number of persons apprehended being responsible for road accidents alongwith the number of persons out of them who were punished; and

(d) the details thereof alongwith the action taken thereon?

Completion of NHDP works

560. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NHAI has estimated completion of 45 per cent of the NHDP works by December, 2003;

(b) whether the Planning Commission has expressed doubts of completion of the project by the targeted date of mid-2005;

(c) whether the NHAI has yet to acquire land along 2130 kms. length in various States;

(d) whether problems related to negotiation of subsequent funding from World Bank and ADB are also causing delay; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken to solve the same?

National highways in Orissa

561. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and total length of

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

National Highways in Orissa, as on date, alongwith total amount allotted for development of National Highways in Orissa during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) whether Government have received any fresh proposal for conversion of State

Highways into National Highways in Orissa during the current year; and

(c) if so, what is the target of completion of four lane road from Chennai to Kolkata?

NEW DELHI;
The 18th July, 2003

Asadha 27, 1925 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

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