

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the August 26, 2004/Bhadrapada 4, 1926 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions — 155

Employment generation through rural industrialisation

†2383. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to boost up rural industrialisation with the help of private and public sectors for uplifting the rural standard of living and generating more opportunities of employment by establishing better co-ordination between towns and villages;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

Labour migration

2384. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that due to inadequate agro-based industries a large scale of labour migration

is occurring in Chhattisgarh to other States leading to their exploitation in those States;

(b) whether Government propose to establish some agro-based industries to arrest large scale of labour migration; and

(c) if so, the number and details of the industries that are proposed or have been established so far in the State?

KVIC units in Uttaranchal

†2385. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the units set up in Uttaranchal by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether some of the units already set up by the KVIC in this State have been closed;

(c) if so, the total number of the units closed;

(d) whether Government have fixed any

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

target to open new units in the State during the current plan period; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Financial conditions of farmers

†2386. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any plan to establish agriculture based industries to provide technical training for it as well as to provide financial assistance for the establishment of industries to farmers in order to bring improvement in the economic conditions of the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government are considering to formulate any plan in this regard, in the near future?

Revolving funds for training rural youth in Karnataka

2387. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Karnataka has sought Central assistance for starting a revolving fund for training rural youth in job-oriented courses;

(b) if so, the amount of Central assistance sought; and

(c) the present status of the proposal?

Crisis in the Coir Industry

2388. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of

the fact that the Coir Industry is facing serious crisis;

(b) whether Government have contemplated any comprehensive plan to tide over the crisis;

(c) whether Government have taken initiative to put coir as an agricultural product in the WTO list; and

(d) if so, the details and the results of such initiatives?

Duties of Coir Board in Andhra Pradesh

2389. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assigned specific duties to the Coir Board to help coconut growers;

(b) to what extent the Coir Board has made its presence felt in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) the details of such work done by the Coir Board in helping farmers of Andhra Pradesh in the year 2003-04;

(d) whether any funds were made available by the Coir Board in that period; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Exploration of Mineral Sand in Kerala

2390. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the stage at which the joint venture project participating NMDP, IRE and KSIDC for the exploration of mineral sand of chavara in Kerala stands at present; and

(b) the progress attained in the proposal so far?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Nuclear Island

2391. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have any plan to make "Koodankulam" a Nuclear Island;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) by when, the Koodankulam Atomic Power Station would start supplying power and what would be its capacity?

Transfer of officials in NCL

†2392. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of those group A and B officials in the Jayant project of Northern Coal Fields Limited, Madhya Pradesh who have been working in the same sections against the same posts and for the last 3, 5 or 7 years separately;
- (b) the rules regarding the transfer of Officials and Engineers working in Coal India;
- (c) the reasons for not implementing the transfer rules in different Coal Fields; and
- (d) by when all the Officials/Engineers would be transferred as per the transfer rules?

Minimum wages for labours of Basundhara Project, MCL

2393. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that contractor's labours working at Basundhara Project, M.C.L. Sundargarh, are not being paid minimum wages;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that they

are being denied other statutory benefits too; and

- (c) if so, reactions of Government in the matter?

Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill

†2394. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether workers unions functioning in the industry have demanded the withdrawal of Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) Government's reaction on this demand; and
- (d) the points of the said bill on which objections are being raised and the reasons therefor?

Coal Mines Nationalisation (Amendment) Bill

2395. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government have prepared a draft Coal Mines Nationalisation (Amendment) Bill to facilitate private participation in the Coal sector which enables Government to give coal blocks to private companies for captive mining;
- (b) if so, the salient features of the proposed amendment;
- (c) whether consultations have been made with the representatives concerned in this regard; and
- (d) if so, the outcome of the consultations?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Use of obsolete technology in mining

2396. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Rs. 4000 crores of FDI has been approved in the mining sector, recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that due to obsolete technology used by Indian miners, the country has been deficient in high-value minerals; and

(d) the total mineral production of the country during the last three years; year-wise?

Cooking Coal reserves

2397. SHRI R. K. ANAND: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that good quality cooking coal reserves have depleted and the washeries are not getting coal of superior quality in desired quantity to yield clean coal; and

(b) if so, the action Government propose to take in the matter?

Private investment in mines and minerals sector

†2398. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed private investment in mines and minerals sector;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Losses to ECL, BCCL and CCL

†2399. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether E.C.L., B.C.C.L. and C.C.L. are suffering losses continuously for the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner Government contemplate to solve this problem?

Royalty for mining of Lignite at Neyveli

2400. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the royalty for mining of Lignite at Neyveli in Tamil Nadu was taken several years in advance by the Government of Tamil Nadu during 1996—2001;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the royalty for Lignite due to be given to Tamil Nadu as on date?

Illegal occupation of SECL land

†2401. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the persons who have illegally occupied the S.E.C.L. land in Ghevra/Dipika area along with the area thereof; and

(b) the action taken by S.E.C.L. to get the land vacated?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Privatisation of Coal mining

2402. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Coal users make a strong case for privatisation of mining to deal with the shortage of Coal in a sustained manner;

(b) whether this issue was discussed at a higher level meeting convened with the representatives from the Ministries of Power, Steel, Railways, Fertilizers besides coal users;

(c) whether Government have decided to open up mining sector to private and foreign investment and have approved Rs. 4000 crores of FDI in Coal sector; and

(d) if so, to what extent these decisions would help to meet deficit in high value minerals?

Coal production in the country

2403. SHRI SANTOSH
BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the demand of coal in the country is fully met by the domestic production;

(b) the details regarding the mine-wise production and the country's annual demand of coal; and

(c) the details of import of coal for the last three years?

Land allotted by SECL to ex-servicemen

†2404. SHRI RAMADHAR
KASHYAP: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of houses, workshops, shops and land allotted by S.E.C.L. to ex-servicemen; and

(b) the details thereof and the basis for allotting land acquired for the purpose of coal mining?

Steps taken by Mahanadi Coalfields for back filling and rehabilitation

2405. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHA-
PATRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Mahanadi Coalfields Limited for back filling and full rehabilitation of excavated mines; and

(b) the reasons for very slow and tardy progress in such rehabilitation and the remedial measures proposed to be taken thereon?

Availability of funds in mining sector

2406. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Coal India Limited has posted a gross profit of Rs. 3700 crores in 2003-04;

(b) whether Government are aware that fund crunch may lead to coal scarcity in future; and

(c) if so, how Government propose to meet the demand of fund in mining sectors?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Import of high quality coal

2407. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are importing high quality coal from Australia and other countries;

(b) if so, whether such quality is not available in the country;

(c) whether any effort has been made to improve coal quality in the country;

(d) the exploration efforts going on in this regard;

(e) whether any agreements been signed with foreign companies to intensify the high quality coal exploration efforts; and

(f) the details thereof?

VRS in BSNL and MTNL

†2408. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce voluntary retirement scheme in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that MTNL had introduced voluntary retirement scheme for its employees working in its offices situated in Delhi and Mumbai;

(d) if so, present status thereof; and

(e) by when, Government would completely ban voluntary retirement scheme?

Development of C-DAC

2409. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry in co-ordination with the C-DAC has developed cyber forensic technique to deal with the cyber crimes;

(b) if so, the details of the software tools that have been developed by the C-DAC;

(c) whether the software tools also help in analysing the other crimes, apart from cyber crimes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Public awareness programme in Himachal Pradesh

†2410. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal regarding "Introduction of Information Technology for Public Awareness in Himachal Pradesh" had been sent to the Additional Director, Department of Information and Technology by the Director, Information and Public Relations, Himachal Pradesh *vide* their letter dated the 30th October, 2002 for approval so that the information regarding various markets (mandis) in the country could be provided to the farmers of the State and an awareness could be created amongst general public about Government's development and welfare programme; and

(b) if so, what further action has been taken thereon and by when, a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Recruitment in TCIL

2411. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Staff recruited in Telephone Consultancy India Limited after the take over of the present CMD;

(b) whether guidelines of the CVC have been followed in Campus recruitment; and

(c) the details regarding above recruitments and how much turn over have increased?

BSNL's operation in Delhi and Mumbai

2412. SHRIMATI BIMBARAIKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the BSNL is keen to operate its services in Delhi and Mumbai Metro Circuits and the MTNL wants to expand its reach beyond Delhi and Mumbai Metro Areas;

(b) if so, whether these proposals, if implemented, would lead to competition between the two State-owned telecom companies to the advantage of private players; and

(c) whether Government would consider merging both BSNL and MTNL to counter the stiff competition posed by private telecom companies, both in Delhi and Mumbai and also all over the country?

Cybercrimes

2413. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of cyber crimes registered in the country since IT and other related Acts came into force, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that cyber crimes are on increase during the last couple of years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what preventive mechanism Government have to counter cyber crimes in the country?

Expansion of mobile network

†2414. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited is formulating any scheme for expansion of its mobile network;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the expenditure to be incurred thereon; and

(c) the total amount to be incurred on the expansion of telecommunication in the States of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh and the target set for providing new telephone connections?

Compassionate appointment

†2415. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names, designation and date of demise of deceased employees in different

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

offices of Chief Post Master General, Delhi Circle whose dependants could not be provided with employment on compassionate ground by the Department during the last three years and till the 31st July, 2004;

(b) the names and addresses of persons whose cases have been accepted or rejected during the above said period; and

(c) by when those persons would be taken on employment whose cases have been accepted and a final action would be taken in the matter of those whose cases have been rejected?

Unified licensing regime

2416. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether TRAI has recommended that all kind of telecom and media services can be provided to the consumers from a single pipe under a unified licensing regime;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations made by TRAI in this regard;

(c) whether Government have examined the recommendations and propose to implement in a time bound period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Victimisation of office bearers of SC/ST Employees Association

2417. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that office bearers of MTNL SC/ST Employees Welfare Association are being victimised as they are demanding justice and dialogue with the Management

to get redressal of their grievances;

(b) if so, whether any representation to this effect has been received; and

(c) what is the nature of grievances and the action taken to redress the same?

Rectification of cable

2418. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 277 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 7th August, 2003 and state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the damaged portion of the cable from Nalanda to Daman Khanda has even now not been rectified/replaced;

(b) whether Government are also aware that a number of telephones still continue to remain non-functional/out of order for months together;

(c) whether concerned officers, mostly being local do not pay any attention to the complaints; and

(d) if so, what action Government would take to ensure that the damaged portion of the cable is actually replaced and consumers get satisfactory service?

Green Card Scheme

2419. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Germany has extended Green Card Scheme for Overseas Information Technology specialists to work in Germany;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any limit has been prescribed for issue of work permits under the Green Card Scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Mail Processing

2420. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to ensure a dedicated mail transmission system to cater to the special customer needs, local mail has been segmented from non-local mail;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what mechanism the Postal Department is adopting in mail processing with the help of Information Technology?

Undersea cable by VSNL

2421. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that VSNL has, recently, started working on laying 3175 kms. of undersea cable in the Indian seabed between India and Singapore;

(b) if so, the details of bandwidth capacity of the cable; and

(c) by when, the project is expected to be completed and become commercially operative?

Illegal telephone exchanges

2422. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the illegal telephone exchanges operating in several parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the officials of the VSNL and the BSNL are involved in running such illegal telephone exchanges;

(d) if so, the facts thereof; and

(e) the strategies to be adopted to unearth functioning of such illegal telephone exchanges and also to book the officials of VSNL/BSNL?

Illegal telephone exchange

2423. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a team of officials of DoT and MTNL raided premises on the 6th August, 2004 near Kalkaji Bus Depot in South Delhi and unearthed an illegal telephone exchange running there;

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

(c) the particulars of persons arrested in this connection;

(d) the loss Government have suffered, so far, due to the illegal international phone calls made through the illegal telephone exchange; and

(e) the measures Government have

taken to curb the flourishing International Phone Calls market and the extent of success achieved in these efforts?;

Reduction in ISD/STD rates

2424. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL have recently reduced the rates of ISD and STD calls;

(b) if so, the details thereof *vis-a-vis* earlier rates;

(c) whether MTNL has not offered similar reduction in rates thereby depriving the subscribers of Delhi and Mumbai of reduction in rates;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) by when, MTNL is likely to similarly reduce the rates?

Foreign investment

†2425. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the investment made by foreign companies in the field of Communication network development in various States of the country;

(b) the number of proposals received from the foreign companies by Government in the field of Communication in North-Eastern States during the last three years and the number of proposals sanctioned therefrom, and;

(c) the target set for investment during the first two years of the Tenth Five Year Plan period in this regard and the details of the investment actually made State-wise?

Mobile connections

†2426. SHRI BALAWANT ALIAS BAL APTE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of functional Mobile Connection (Excel) of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited at present;

(b) whether the said service is available on demand;

(c) if not, the State-wise number of persons on the waiting-list; and

(d) the details of the proposal formulated to cope up with the large number thereof?

Inclusion of broadband in the definition of infrastructure facility

2427. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI ANAND SHARMA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:

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

(a) whether Telecom industry has demanded that broadband should be included in the definition of infrastructure facility under Section 80 (AI)4 (1) of Income Tax Act and accordingly be given ten year tax exemption;

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

(c) the details of the other major sops given/proposed to be given to broadband services by TRAI?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

e-post and e-bill post

2428. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether new initiatives like 'e-post' and 'e-bill post' have been introduced in the post offices; and

(b) if so, the response from the Public and the revenue generated therefrom during the period since the inception of the schemes?

Delay in delivery of mails

2429. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even Registered Letters are also deliberately delayed for petty tips by postmen in suburban areas of North Bihar;

(b) if not, the reasons for delayed delivery of Registered Letters to the addressees after the lapse of nine/ten days at Bhikhanpura District Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Khabra Post Office;

(c) whether it is also a fact that during the month of June, 2004, such cases have been reported in this regard;

(d) whether there were earlier complaints against Post Office/postmen of this Post Office also; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken to prevent such recurrences?

Prompt delivery of postcards and envelopes

2430. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that ordinary postcards and envelopes are not delivered in a reasonable time to the concerned persons in the Districts of U.P. especially in Allahabad; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what steps Government propose to take for prompt delivery of the postcards and envelopes?

Telephone facilities in villages

†2431. SHRI BALAWANT ALIAS BAL APTE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in the country where telephone facility has been provided during the last three years and till date;

(b) total number of villages which are still out of reach of this facility;

(c) whether the Government have formulated any phased time bound to provide the telephone connections of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited in the said villages; and

(d) if so, the total funds made available or the same?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Telephone fault in Andhra Pradesh

2432. SHRINANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) number of telephones, the fault of which could not be repaired for more than seven days, in Andhra Pradesh and areas falling under Hyderabad District Telecom during the years 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04, even in the midst of lodging complaints by the customers;

(b) whether Government would assure of taking preventive and remedial steps to reduce this seven days period and bring a drastic reduction in faulty functioning of telephones;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Rental concession on landline telephones

2433. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the senior citizens granted rental concession on landline telephones in Delhi during the last one year;

(b) the number of cases still pending as on the 30th June, 2004;

(c) by when, they would be finalised; and

(d) whether Government are considering to extend such concession to other States also, if so, State-wise details thereof and by when, it would be implemented?

Free telephones for internet service

2434. SHRINANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to give free telephone connections for internet service; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Tuticorin-Colombo ferry service

2435. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India opposing the proposed Tuticorin-Colombo ferry service citing the activities of the banned Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE);

(b) whether it is also a fact that the benefits of the proposed Ferry Service in terms of trade would be minimal and would be largely symbolic and that the availability of a cheap ferry service would further give a fillip to drug smuggling apart from attracting potential asylum seekers; and

(c) whether it is also true that the said Ferry Service proposal was deferred earlier by the Government when the Hon'ble Chief Minister had opposed the said move?

Jobs for America Act

2436. SHRIRAMA MUNIREDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US have introduced the jobs for America Act;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) to what extent it would help/affect the Indian IT professionals who desire to go to USA?

Official level talks between India and Pakistan

2437. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have agreed to hold official level talks in the month of August, 2004;

(b) if so, main points that have been discussed so far;

(c) whether many of the problems have been solved;

(d) if so, what are the issues still outstanding; and

(e) by when, final decision is likely to be taken?

Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

2438. SHRIDATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to control the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) which damage law and order and political stability;

(b) if so, whether the Customs Officials lack awareness and training because of highly sensitive nature of the technology;

(c) whether the United States, under directions of the UN Security Council, has started to organise workshops and train Indian Custom officials in detecting

WMDs to check its transnational smuggling and proliferation;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) who is going to fund the training programme, the US or the UN?

Truck drivers hostage crisis

2439. SHRIDATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Indians are being sent to Iraq from third countries as is clear from case of three Indian truck drivers taken hostage in Iraq;

(b) whether Government have taken any measures to stop giving emigration clearance for Jordan, Kuwait and UAE from where many Indian head to Iraq;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the security situation is not congenial to work in Iraq; and

(e) if so, the measures taken to appeal to all Indians not to go there and also to come back if they are in Iraq?

Unsafe atomic establishments

†2440. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a solution to the danger of Atomic war between India and Pakistan has been found out;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Atomic Establishments in Pakistan are not safe and they are within reach of the terrorists; and

(d) if so, the arrangements being made by Government to deal with this situation?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Discrimination in the name of airport security

2441. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether harassment and active discrimination against Asian and other non whites in the name of airport security has been reported by a Delhi Architect woman in July, 2004; and

(b) if so, the action taken to take up the matter with the appropriate counterparts in Austria for redressal of such incidents?

Invalidating Indian passports for Iraq

2442. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided not to make the passports of Indians valid for Iraq for the time being;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the number of people to be affected by this decision?

India's claim for permanent seat in UN Security Council

2443. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Germany is backing India's claim for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council;

(b) which are the other countries which has promised to back India on this issue; and

(c) whether Government have discussed this issue with USA, if so, what is the response of United States?

Meeting of Foreign Ministers of SAARC countries

2444. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of Foreign Ministers of SAARC countries was held in Islamabad from July 18, 2004 onwards;

(b) whether any agenda for the ensuing SAARC Summit was decided upon in this meeting; and

(c) whether Pakistan underscored the need for inclusion of peace and security issues for the SAARC to emerge as a vibrant organization, if so, what was India's stand in regard thereto?

Bilateral talks with Pakistan

2445. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any bilateral negotiation have taken place with Pakistan in the recent past at the Secretary and Ministerial levels;

(b) details of the issues discussed at the respective levels;

(c) whether in the past Pakistan was provided with a list of twenty fugitives hiding in that country with a request to extradite them in order to bring them to justice in India;

(d) was the issue of extradition of these fugitives included in the recent discussions/interactions with the Pakistani authorities;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Streamlining of passport issue procedure

2446. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passports issued in the country in the year 2003-04;

(b) the number of passports issued in the year 2003-04 in different cities, giving the respective number of passports issued and the names of the cities where the offices were based;

(c) whether Government are aware that ordinary people are being harassed and heckled at most regional passport offices; and

(d) in what manner Government propose to streamline the issuance of passports?

Official policy to deal with hostage situation

2447. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have in place any set official policy to deal with the hostage situation by domestic and foreign terrorists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to formulate basic guidelines to deal the cases of hostages which of late, have started increasing and if not, the reasons therefor?

India's policy towards West Asia

2448. SHRI MANOJ BHATTA - CHARYA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been a paradigm

shift in India's policy towards the West Asia; and

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

Norms for US citizenship

2449. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. Administration has set very rigorous norms for the immigrants who intend to adopt the U.S. citizenship;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

BIMST-EC summit

2450. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the benefits derived by India in the recently held BIMST-EC Summit in Bangkok;

(b) whether any Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) has been signed in the Summit;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) in what manner would it help the Indian industry?

SAARC Summit

2451. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a joint declaration was signed and issued after the conclusion of the SAARC Summit held at Islamabad in January this year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and to what extent it is expected to improve bilateral relations between India and Pakistan?

SAARC Summit in Islamabad

2452. SHRI DARA SINGH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers was held in July, 2004 at Islamabad;

(b) what are the details of Agenda/issues raised at 25th Session of SAARC Foreign Ministers, particularly by India's Foreign Minister; and

(c) what was the outcome of discussions held in Pakistan and the details of the future agenda drawn up by Council of Ministers for next SAARC meeting?

Israeli Trade Consulate in Mumbai

2453. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Israel has decided to open a Trade Consulate in Mumbai;

(b) if so, by when, the Consulate is expected to start functioning;

(c) whether India has also decided to open a Trade Consulate in Israel; and

(d) if so, the name of the place and by when, the same would start functioning?

Arrest of fishermen in neighbouring countries

2454. SHRI R. KAMARAJ : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of fishermen arrested by our neighbouring countries till now;

(b) what remedial actions, like providing compensation to poor fishermen who are in deep grief due to loss of their boats, have been taken by Government to save the families of poor fishermen; and

(c) the number of fishermen released by those countries till now and the total number of fishermen still under imprisonment during the last ten years?

Associating China with SAARC

2455. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent SAARC Foreign Ministers' meet in Islamabad the question of associating China with SAARC for integrated economic development of the region was considered;

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

(c) the steps taken so far in this regard?

Visit of foreign Minister to Pakistan

2456. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he visited Islamabad from July, 19 onwards;

(b) if so, the issues discussed with Pakistan during the visit;

(c) the outcome thereof, indicating the Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding signed there; and

(d) the steps taken and being taken by Government in the light thereof?

Fishermen in Pakistan custody

2457. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the six fishermen employed in the Sultanate of Oman were reported missing and later learnt to have been under the custody of Pakistani Government; and

(b) whether Government have initiated

any steps so far for their release from Pakistan, if so, the details thereof?

Extension of Tawaghat-Gunji road to facilitate Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims

†2458. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to extend Tawaghat-Gunji road, presently under construction, upto Sialekh to facilitate the travel of Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims coming from various parts of the country and abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps Government are taking to make this path convenient on the lines of path available through China?

Power project in Bhutan

2459. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a power project is to be set up in Bhutan as part of the Indo-Bhutan Cooperation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is going to help India in any manner; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Indians in Iraq after US invasion

†2460. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians who went to Iraq after US invasion there; and

(b) the measures taken by Government to protect Indians in Iraq?

Housing scheme for beedi workers in Orissa

2461. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of beedi workers in the State of Orissa and the number for which funds have been sanctioned under the relevant housing scheme; and

(b) whether it is a fact that the progress under the scheme has been slow in Orissa, and if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial measures proposed to be taken along with the time-frame in regard thereto?

Scheme for agricultural workers

†2462. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 250 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 22nd July, 2004 and state:

(a) the State-wise details of fifty districts selected on experimental basis and the criteria adopted for such selection;

(b) by when, unorganised sector workers social security scheme, 2004 would be implemented;

(c) whether the Central Government would take any concrete initiative for the welfare of agricultural workers in case there is difference of opinion among the States on this issue; and

(d) if not, the details thereof?

District level vocational training system

2463. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for delay in setting up of district-level vocational training system; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.