

of unemployment and incidence of poverty have very probably increased since 1991. The report, however, also admits that "this cannot be empirically confirmed". Comprehensive estimates of incidence of poverty are not available for periods subsequent to 1987-88. Employment growth is estimated to have been low, about 1% during 1991-92, due primarily to the decline in the rate of growth of GDP, and has risen to 2% during 1992-93. There is no reversal in the process of employment generation and anti-poverty programmes started in the eighties. Instead, greater emphasis is being given to such programmes in the Eighth Plan. Public expenditure on anti-poverty programmes has also increased during 1993-94 and is expected to be higher during 1994-95. For instance, the Central Plan outlay for the major Centrally Sponsored poverty alleviation programmes in rural areas has risen from Rs. 2436.20 crores during 1992-93 to Rs. 4560 crores during 1993-94 and further to Rs. 5730 crores during 1994-95.

[Translation]

### Communication System in Army

3095. SHRI RAJENDRA  
AGNIHOTRI:  
SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH:  
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN  
SHARAN SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ultra modern communication system Army Radio Engineering Network (AREN) has since been introduced in areas of strategic importance;

(b) if so, the specification thereof;

(c) whether the said system is fully indigenous one; and

(d) the extent to which the capability of the Indian Army is likely to increase as a result of introduction of the said system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b). A *Statement* is annexed.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The availability of automated, secure and electronically survivable communications to Commanders during actual combat is considered to have a force multiplier effect, leading to a decisive edge in battle.

### STATEMENT

AREN is a multi-axial, fully automated, responsive, survivable and secure means of communication to replace hierarchical and linear system of communication. The system involves two level switching and comprises interlinked communication nodes (centres), established to form a grid with a view to cover specific operational areas. Formation headquarters move and deploy as per tactical plan. For communications, these formation headquarters 'hook' themselves to the 'communication centre' already functional in their proximity. Major communication elements forming the grid are therefore divorced from field formation headquarters thus making them lighter and facilitating speedy movement of field forces within the tactical battle area without affecting their communication support. The fielding of the system for our strategic formations commenced in 1989 and has since progressed well.