

a memorandum in support of their charter of demands to him on 7th April, 1980;

(b) if so, what are their demands;

(c) whether Government have considered those demands; and

(d) if so, the steps taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The demands relate to recognition of courses, provision of independent campus, better hostel facilities, Railway concessions, subsidy for the mess, vehicle for the school, increase in scholarship and book allowance, increase in school budget introduction of Drama Departments in the Universities, construction of auditoriums in the different parts of the country, exemption of drama performances from taxes and theatre halls for performances at nominal rent.

(c) and (d) The National School of Drama is an autonomous organisation. The demands of the students cover a wide range. The Government and the School have referred the demands to the authorities concerned, such as Railways and University Grants Commission. Others are being examined.

Telephones system in Calcutta

85. SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE:

SHRI DINEN BHATTA-CHARYA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the telephone system in Calcutta is completely disrupted; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to set right the whole telephone system in Calcutta?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI C. M. STEPHEN): (a) and (b) The Telephone system in Calcutta is not completely disrupted. But there is some deterioration in service primarily due to large number of underground cable breakdowns and long duration power shedding in telephone exchanges. In order to reduce the underground cable faults a Task Force has been recently created in Calcutta Telephones to tackle the problems.

A number of measures such as—

- (i) Laying cables in ducts
- (ii) Pressurisation of cables
- (iii) Laying Jelly-filled cables
- (iv) Introduction of digital microwave system are under implementation.

For improving power supply the matter has been taken up with the Electricity authorities and improvement is expected.

Low procurement of Wheat

86. SHRI GULAM RASOOL KOCHAK:
SHRI P. M. SAYEED:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India has not been able to procure wheat to the level on which it was during the corresponding period of last year;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons for the low procurement of wheat during May, 1980;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the wheat procured so far by Government is still lying in the open in Mandis and is likely to be spoiled during the coming rainy season;

(d) if so, the steps being taken to remove this wheat to warehouses; and

(e) what steps are being considered to meet the shortage of wheat that will be faced due to low procurement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main reasons for low procurement are estimated lower production resulting in less market arrivals, higher level of open market prices than the support prices fixed by the Government, brisk purchases made by the traders of consuming States, and withholding of stocks by the producers in expectation of further rise in prices.

(c) and (d). Wheat procurement is still continuing and possibility of some of the stocks lying in open in the mandis cannot be ruled out. Instructions have, however, been issued to remove the procured stocks to food storage depots within 48 hours of its purchase. Adequate steps to cover the stocks with tarpaulins/polythene covers and other measures to avoid damage are taken on regular basis.

(e) Under the Buffer-stocking policy the Government have adequate stock of foodgrains and the shortfall in wheat procurement is expected to be met out of these stocks.

Free and compulsory education upto age of 14 years

87. SHRI GULAM RASOOL
KOCHAK:

SHRI M. V. CHANDRA-
SHEKHARA MURTHY:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that pro-

vision of free and compulsory education to children upto the age of 14 as envisaged in the Directive Principles of the Constitution is still far from achievement;

(b) if so, whether the Fourth Educational Survey has pointed out that not even 20 per cent has been achieved by Government in this regard so far;

(c) if so, what are the main reasons for this slow progress; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to see that this is achieved during the Sixth Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND):

(a) to (c). Yes, Sir, it is fact that the Constitutional goal of free and compulsory education is still far from achievement. But it is not correct that not even 20 per cent enrolment has been achieved. The position of enrolment at the elementary stage (classes I—VIII), according to IVth All India Educational Survey, is as given in the attached Statement.

(d) The Sixth Five Year Plan 1980—85 is still under formulation. Appropriate measures will be taken to increase enrolment and reduce drop-outs. It will be too early to indicate the nature and extent of the measures.