

mechanical exchanges by electronic exchanges,

- (ii) introduction of pulse code modulation are digital microwave systems;
- (iii) ducting of cables; and
- (iv) replacements of worn out external plants.

A special Focus Committee under the Chairmanship of the Finance Minister of the State Government has also been set up to suggest further measures for improvement during the next Plan period.

Implementation of Sen Committee's Recommendations

284. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the steps taken to implement the Sen Committee's recommendations for agricultural development in the Eastern States?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): Report of Dr. S.R. Sen Committee on Agricultural Productivity in Eastern India was submitted to Reserve Bank of India in December 1984. Main spear-heads of development for Eastern states as recommended by the Committee inter-alia included massive provision of tube wells, pumps, controlled use of irrigation, appropriate water management techniques, adequate drainage net work, micro watershed development, orientation of input services and extension support to small and marginal farmers, land reforms, revitalisation of credit and cooperative institutions etc. The Committee also worked out a rough estimate of Public outlays and needs of credit to provide a broad indication of the magnitude of efforts required for implementation of the recommended programmes.

The recommendations of the Committee were considered at a Conference of Chief Ministers of Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal held at Patna on 8th January, 1986, under the Chairmanship of the then Union Agriculture Minister. Since Agriculture is a State subject, the concerned State governments were advised to implement the recommendations as part of the State Plan Programmes for which funds are available under State/Central Schemes keeping in view their relative priorities. The States were also called upon to improve the quality of agricultural management, fullutilisation of resources available under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes and enforce credit discipline to double the supply of credit from the banking system. The states agreed to incorporate the recommendations of the Committee in their State Plans.

In response to the follow-up action initiated by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, the information received so far reveals that many of the recommendations of the Committee are by and large included in their various on-going and new programmes.

Release of Postal Stamp of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in 1990

285. SHRI RAM NAIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to release a special postal stamp on the occasion of birth centenary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in 1990; and

(b) if so, the time bound action proposed by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN): (a) No Sir, 2 stamps have already been issued to commemorate reserved memory of Dr.

B.R. Ambedkar on 14.4.1966 and 14.4.1973 in denominations of 15 paise and 20 paise respectively.

(b) There is no proposal at the moment for yet another stamp.

Opening of New Post Office in Bombay North

286. SHRI RAM NAIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether with the increase in population of Bombay North, the workload of delivering postal articles by postmen has increased;

(b) the number of additional postmen appointed and number of new post offices opened during the last five years in Bombay Circle; and

(c) the time bound action proposed for recruiting additional postmen and opening of new post offices in Bombay Circle?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Bombay City by itself does not constitute a separate Postal Circle. It is under the overall control of Maharashtra Postal Circle. However, the number of additional postmen appointed in Bombay North is four and the number of new post offices opened is two.

(c) The following proposals in this regard in Maharashtra Circle are under consideration:

(i) Postmen: 274

(ii) New Post Offices: 188
(Target in 1989-90)

It may be added that proposals for opening new post offices in North Bombay have not yet been finalised.

Pakistan PM's statement over laying of Foundation Stone for Ram Mandir at Ayodhya

287. SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state: the reaction of Government on the statement made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan with regard to the laying of the foundation stone for Ram Mandir at Ayodhya?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): On November 11, 1989 our Official Spokesmen had issued a statement reacting to the Pakistan Prime Minister's statement. A copy of our spokesman's statement is given below.

STATEMENT

The Government of India, the U.P. State Government, our Courts of Law and many men and women of goodwill have succeeded in not allowing religious fervour to deteriorate into bigotry and violence in connection with events in Ayodhya in the past few days.

Elaborate arrangements were made by the Central and State Governments to ensure law and order, and the sanctity and safety of the disputed premises. The site of the foundation stone ceremony was well outside the present disputed premises, as claimed by the Sunni Central Wakf Board.

The Government and people of India are firmly committed to secularism, tolerance and non-violence. The interests of the majority and minority communities have been successfully harmonised in our country.

We have seen, with great regret, the Pakistan Government's statement about Ayodhya.