

(c) There is no shortfall in the number of Scheduled Tribe employees. However, one Group 'C' post reserved for Scheduled Tribes is vacant and action to fill up the post has been initiated by the Station Director, All India Radio, Ranchi.

**Offer to expand electricity generation from European countries and Japan**

285. SHRI SUSHIL BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a host of European countries and Japan have offered to erect power plants in India in view of the Ministry's efforts to expand electricity generation; and

(b) if so, what are their terms and suitability for the country, taking into consideration all factors relevant to our present economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN): (a) and (b). Various offers from countries/overseas companies have been received for supply of equipment for power projects with possibilities of financing, through Government Credit, Suppliers' Credit and commercial loans. The details of these offers are given in the statement laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-5436/82]. No decision has been taken by Government on these proposals.

**Impact of certain State Press Bills on the free flow of information**

286. SHRI SATYENDRA NARAIN SINHA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assessed the impact of the Bihar Press Bill and two other Bills of similar nature of Orissa and Tamil Nadu on the free flow of information and the freedom of the Press; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the assessment made in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND

BROADCASTING (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN): (a) and (b). The Acts amending the Indian Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure which correspond to the Indian Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure (Bihar Amendment) Bill, 1982, have been in existence since 1960 and 1962, respectively. There is nothing to indicate that these Acts have come in the way of free flow of information and the freedom of the Press. As the Bihar Amendment Bill has created a controversy, the leading Press associations in the country were addressed recently to offer their views on those provisions of the Bihar Bill which, in their opinion, violate the Constitutional guarantees of freedom of the Press or are likely to cause harassment to the Press in its administration and on the grounds, if any, on which they apprehend denial of fair trial. They have also been requested to give their specific suggestions to ensure that in the course of administration of the Act, the executive does not misuse the powers under the Act and the trial is fair.

**Telephone Exchange in Assam**

287. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Telephone Exchanges in Assam;

(b) how many of them are automatic and how many of them are manual;

(c) number of exchanges in Assam with STD Service; and

(d) what specific plan the Ministry have drawn up for the next five years to improve the telephone services in the North Eastern Region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) to (c). As on 31st March 1982. Total Exchanges in Assam—152, Automatic Exchanges—124, Manual Exchanges—28, Exchanges with STD—1.

(d) The details are given in the attached statement.

## Statement

## ANNEXURE

Tentative Plans for Development of Telephones services in N.E. Region (comprising Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram).

- (1) New Exchanges: 42 exchanges proposed for opening during remaining period of the Sixth Plan.
- (2) Expansion of existing Exchanges: Plans have been drawn for expansion of the following exchanges progressively during the next five years: GAUHATI, SHILLONG, DISPUR, DIMAPUR, KOHIMA, AIZWAL are at present MAX II Type exchanges, these will be converted to Main Auto Exchanges of Type MAX I. Generally other exchanges will also be expanded subject to build up of demand and availability of equipment.
- (3) Automatisation: Existing manual exchanges at following places will be progressively converted to automatic:
- Main Auto Exchanges (MAX I) planned*  
Dibrugarh, Tinsukhia, Jorhat, Nowgong, Tezpur, Silchar, Agartala, Imphal.
- Auto Exchange of MAX II type planned*  
(at district headquarter towns)
- Halfong, North Lakhimpur Khonsa, Jowai, Tura, Villiam Nagar, Mokokchung, Zumbhote, Kailashahar, Radhakishore Pur, Tuensang.
- (4) Trunk Auto Exchange (TAX) The existing TAX at Shilling is likely to be expanded. New TAXs are proposed at Gauhati and Jorhat. STD facilities will be provided to more number of district headquarters.
- (5) Integrated Development of Secondary Area Network Integrated digital network has been planned for Kohima, Mokokehung and Tuensang districts.
- (6) Transmission Plan in North-Eastern Circle: All the district headquarters in this Region are being connected to respectively to establish reliable communication. A wide band microwave system connecting Shillong, Gauhati to Jorhat, Dibrugarh and Tinsukhia is under execution. Augmentation of Jorhat-Dimapur-Imphal Microwave system and Jorhat-North Lakhimpur-Itanagar UHF system is also planned. A wide band microwave system between Shillong-Silchar-Agartala is also planned.
- (7) Multi-access rural radio concentrator systems: Long Distance Public Telephones to be installed using these modern systems in Imphal and Agartala.