

Upgradation of Vizhinjam Fishing Harbour

5730. SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of harbours/ports in the country;
- (b) the present grading thereof;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to upgrade Vizhinjam Fishing Harbour in order to make available sufficient transport facilities there; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE Minister of STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) and (b) There are 181 identified Minor Ports in the country managed by the State Governments and 11 Major Ports under the jurisdiction of the Central Government.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) does not arise.

Container Terminal at Vallarpadam, Cochin

5731. SHRI GEORGE EDEN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent for the construction of the container terminal project at Valiarpadam, Cochin so far; and

(b) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN):

(a) and (b) Container Transshipment Terminal at Vallarpadam, Cochin is proposed to be developed through private funds. Expressions of Interest have been received by Cochin Port Trust from private parties. After the selection of the party, a detailed feasibility study will have to be carried out by the selected party to work out the cost and other details. It is, therefore, too early to indicate the time by which the project is likely to be completed.

[Translation]

Out of Order Telephones, Telephone Exchanges

5732. DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the telephone exchanges and the telephones installed in rural areas in the country are out of order for the last six months;

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

(c) whether it is causing a loss of crores of rupees;

(d) the details of schemes formulated for the proper maintenance of telephone exchanges before the installation of telephone connections and the reasons for not implementing them;

(e) whether many officials have been found guilty in this regard; and

(f) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA):

(a) and (b) No, Sir. However, 105 small exchanges in Andhra Pradesh and 6 in J&K lying damaged/burnt due to militancy/terrorism.

(c) No Sir. However, some loss of revenue will be there because of damaged/burnt exchanges.

(d) The schemes formulated for proper maintenance of telephone connection are mentioned below:

- (i) Overhead lines are being replaced gradually by underground cables.
- (ii) Replacement of old and worn out deopwire, house wiring, telephone instruments, etc.
- (iii) Replacement of old batteries of exchanges.
- (iv) Arranging additional Engine alternators for areas where power supply is not reliable.
- (v) Training of Staff to handle modern equipments.
- (vi) Providing proper tools and testing/measuring instruments for better services.
- (vii) Before commissioning of newly installed exchanges acceptance testing is done as per prescribed standards.
- (viii) Regular inspections of exchanges.
- (ix) Daily testing of village public telephones.

Instructions are issued from time to time to ensure implementation of these schemes.