

[English]

Functioning of Telephone Exchanges

795. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN :
SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the telephone exchanges situated in North Bengal areas of West Bengal have not been functioning satisfactorily;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the efforts being made by the Government to remove the deficiencies;

(d) the number of exchanges working with STD facilities out of total exchanges in West Bengal;

(e) whether any scheme to expand and modernise these telephone exchanges and to link more and more telephone exchanges with STD service is under consideration of the Government;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) and (b) The performance of telephone exchanges situated in North Bengal is generally satisfactory.

(c) Following steps are being taken by West Bengal Telecom. Circle for further improvement of the services :

(i) All exchanges have been converted into electronic exchanges.

(ii) Provision of STD connectivity to left out exchanges.

(iii) Replacement of fault prone underground cables by jelly filled cables.

(iv) Upgradation of the outdoor plant network by laying of cables in ducts.

(v) Introduction of modern tools and testing aids.

(vi) Training of operational staff in modern technology systems being inducted in the Deptt. of Telecom Network.

(vii) Opening of customer service centres in large number of places.

(d) The number of exchanges in West Bengal Telecom Circle provided with STD facilities is 556 out of 702 exchanges as on 31.03.1998.

(e) Yes Sir.

(f) (i) The West Bengal Telecom Circle has planned to provide STD facility to 100 more existing exchanges and to 70 new exchanges of 100 exchanges proposed to be set up during 1998-99.

(ii) 246 exchanges out of 727 exchanges as on 31.3.98 (This included 25 Nos. of exchanges of Sikkim also) are planned for capacity augmentation during the same period in West Bengal Telecom Circle subject to the availability of equipment and stores.

(g) Does not arise in view of (f) above.

Review of Operation Black Board Programme

796. SHRI MADHAVRAO PATIL :
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADODA MANDLIK :
SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the operation Black Board Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years;

(c) whether the Government propose to bring about suitable restructuring of the programme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the targets fixed for this programme during the current years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) Since its inception in 1987-88, the scheme of Operation Blackboard is being implemented through State Governments and UT Administration. Quarterly Progress Reports submitted by them are the basis for concurrent monitoring and review of the physical and financial progress of the scheme. Various aspects of Operation Blackboard were discussed and reviewed in Conference of Education Ministers and Education Secretaries of States in April, 1995 and August, 1996.

Four regional meetings were taken by Education Secretary with the officials of all States and UTs during 1997-98 in which the implementation of Operation Blackboard Scheme was reviewed in detail.

In the above mentioned reviews, it was noted with satisfaction that the scheme has contributed to conversion of about 1.50 lakh single teacher primary schools to dual teacher schools, construction of 1.77 lakh classrooms and provision of teaching learning material to 5.23 lakh primary schools. Issues on which