

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARA-MANGALAM): (a) The total installed capacity in the country as on March, 1998 was 89090 MW.

(b) to (d) The Plant Load Factor of thermal power stations during 1997-98 was 64.7%. The capacity utilisation of power stations depends upon various factors such as load demand, hydel thermal mix, technical and commercial feasibility of transfer of power from surplus State/Region to deficit areas, availability of water for hydel stations etc. The international comparisons are therefore not appropriate. However, continuous efforts are being made to improve the plant load factor by a series of measures such as renovation and modernisation, improving the hydel share as renovation and modernisation, improving the hydel share, demand management measures etc.

[English]

Power Grid Corporation

2952. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) the names of States where Power Grid Corporation is functioning;
- (b) whether the economic sanctions imposed by USA, Japan and Australia are likely to have any impact on the functioning of the Power Grid Corporation;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure smooth functioning of the Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARA-MANGALAM): (a) Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. is entrusted with the construction of associated transmission lines from central generating stations which supply bulk power to State Electricity Boards. It operates throughout the country.

(b) to (d) The sanctions do not affect ongoing projects of Powergrid & it is continuing to implement its ongoing projects as programmed.

[Translation]

Transfer of Telephone Connections

2953. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state;

- (a) the number of applications received for transfer of telephone connections in Bhopal city during 1997-98;
- (b) the number of applications considered out of them and the number of applications lying pending;
- (c) whether a long time is taken to transfer the telephones;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to rectify the situation?

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

(a) Sir, 616 applications were received during 1997-98 in Bhopal City for transfer of telephone connections.

(b) Transfer action has been taken on 611 applications and only five (5) are pending due to subscriber reasons.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

[English]

Re-evaluation of English Answer Sheets

2954. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the National Forum for Academic Values has urged the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to revaluation the English answer books of genuine cases of Class XII students;
- (b) if so, the details of the representations made by the forum and the basis thereof;
- (c) whether the English paper valuation has caused a lot of unrest among the student community and some of them have sought intervention of courts in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether Principals of some of the prominent institutions have supported the demand of re-evaluation of English Paper of Class XII; and
- (f) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the CBSE authorities in the aforesaid demand?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) No formal request for re-evaluation of English answer scripts of Class XII candidates has been received so far by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) from the National Forum for Academic Values.

(c) and (d) The CBSE has informed that a Group of Advocates has filed a Writ Petition in the High Court of Delhi praying for re-evaluation of answer scripts of students on demand.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The CBSE has already clarified that scrutinies done after the receipt of complaints have not revealed any aberrations in the marking of the English language paper.

Visits of NTPC Officials Abroad

2955. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the officials of National Thermal Power Corporation who visited abroad during the last three

years; alongwith the purpose of their visits and expenditure incurred by the Government on these visits;

(b) whether any results have been achieved from these visits;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to avoid wasteful expenditure by sending officials abroad?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARA-MANGALAM) : (a) to (d) The details of the officials of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) who visited abroad during the last three years and the expenditure incurred thereon by NTPC are as under:

Year	No. of Officers	Expenditure (Rs. in lacs)
1995-96	81	99.86
1996-97	84	100.18
1997-98	60	77.92

The purposes for which these visits were undertaken include:

- (i) Discussions with multilateral funding agencies etc.
- (ii) Inspection of equipment to be installed in NTPC projects.
- (iii) Business development — consultancy.
- (iv) Training/seminars/conferences/study tours/presenting papers.

NTPC has confirmed that the intended objectives were fully achieved by these visits.

These visits by NTPC officials were need-based and were kept to the minimum so as to avoid any wasteful expenditure and were undertaken with the prior approval of the competent authority.

Basic Telecom Services in Karnataka

2956. SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state;

(a) whether there is any delay in the signing of licence agreement for the basic telecom services in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of private companies who have submitted the application for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) and (b) M/s Hughes Ispat Ltd. who bid successfully for getting the basic service licence both in Maharashtra and Karnataka circles have requested the Government that the

licence for Karnataka circle be issued in the name of another legal entity, M/s Hughes Ispat Communications Ltd. as it would be easier for them to arrange finances for Karnataka circle if a separate legal entity is created for executing the project in that circle. The Government are considering the request and have asked the company to guarantee that M/s Hughes Ispat Ltd., which is the original bidder, stands guarantee for adherence of the terms and conditions of the licence agreement by Hughes Ispat Communications Ltd. and also take overall responsibility in case Hughes Ispat Communications defaults. The response of the company is awaited.

(c) Eight companies had submitted bids for this circle.

Global Environment Facility

2957. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a three day meeting of the Global Environment Facility was held in New Delhi;

(b) if so, the main observations and suggestions made in the meeting and the decisions taken and conventions, if any, adopted at the GEF meet;

(c) the steps taken by the Government in the light thereof;

(d) whether funds have been made available to the NGOs under Global Environment Facility to undertake some projects during the last three years;

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the progress made in implementation of these projects;

(f) whether the Government have finalised the action plan for 1998-99 corresponding to the overall strategy for the country; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A copy of the New Delhi Statement of the First GEF Assembly adopted on 3rd April, 1998 is given in the Statement-I enclosed.

(c) The New Delhi Statement adopted in the GEF Meeting does not warrant any specific steps to be taken by the Government. However, to take maximum advantage of this funding facility, efforts are on to develop more projects.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The details of the GEF projects being undertaken by the NGOs alongwith the progress made in implementation of these projects and the funds released to the NGOs during the last three years are given in the Statement-II enclosed.

(f) and (g) No, Sir. GEF addresses management of global problems in the focal areas of Climate Change, Biodiversity and International waters and Ozone layer. Based on the