

(a) whether retired officers are kept as consultants by the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library without Government's approval and against the established norms;

(b) if so, the details thereof stating the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to rectify the irregularity?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) At present no Consultant is working in the organisation.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Telephone Exchanges in J & K

3662. PROF. CHAMAN LAL GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchange functioning at present in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) whether Telephone Exchanges are less as compare to other States; and

(c) if so, the steps contemplated by the Government to bring the State at par with other States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) The number of Telephone Exchanges working as on 31.5.1998 in J&K Circle are 252.

(b) Telephone Exchanges are opened on the basis of demand. Hence, it is difficult to make comparison with other States on this basis. However, telephone density, i.e. number of Telephone/100 persons is better in J&K Circle than in many other Circles.

(c) The development of Telecom Services in Telecom Circles of the Department including J&K is being planned to achieve the objective of providing Telephone on demand by the end of 9th Five Year Plan viz. 2002.

Irregularities in the Acquisition of Computers by IGNOU

3663. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 850 dated November 24, 1997 and state:

(a) whether the allegations have since been looked into;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by the Government against the persons found guilty; and

(d) the role of the National Informatics Centre in the procurement of computers for the Government organisations and the procedures laid down in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) An inquiry was conducted by this Ministry into the complaints for financial irregularities in respect of the purchase of computer hardware etc. and a report has been submitted to the Central Vigilance Commission for advice.

(d) Computers are purchased by National Informatics Centre (NIC) for Government organisations mainly through NIC's own budget for connecting to NICNET. However, as and when any Government Department/Organisation approaches NIC for assistance in the procurement of hardware and software, procurement is made according to NIC's procedures, if the budget is transferred to NIC. NIC also gives technical support in the procurement of computer hardware according to their own prescribed procedures.

[Translation]

Hydro Power Projects in Himachal Pradesh

3664. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of hydro-power projects of Himachal Pradesh lying pending with the Union Government for approval; and

(b) the time by which these would be accorded approval?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) Three hydroelectric Projects namely Kol Dam (800 MW), Parbati Stage II (800 MW) and Chamera Stage II (300 MW) have been cleared by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) from techno economic angle. The investment sanction will be accorded for Kol Dam Hydroelectric Project and Parbati Stage II only after implementing agencies are identified in consultation with State Government of Himachal Pradesh. Investment approval for Chamera Stage II would be considered only after on an assessment is made by CEA regarding the completion costs based on different modes of execution.

The schemes, namely Budhil (70 MW), Malana (86 MW) and Renuka Dam (40 MW) have been submitted by HP Government to CEA. The techno economic clearance will be accorded after scrutiny by the CEA.

Six schemes namely Allain Duhangan (192 MW), Dhamwari Sunda (70 MW), Hibra (231 MW), Karcham Wangtoo (1020 MW), uhl (100 MW) and Parbati Stage III (510 MW) have since been returned by CEA to State Government for re-submission. These projects will be considered by CEA for techno economic clearance as and when various issues raised are satisfactorily resolved.

[English]

National Institute of Fashion Technology in Kerala

3665. SHRI P. SANKARAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the request from the Government of Kerala for setting up a branch of National Institute of Fashion Technology in Kerala; and

(b) the reason for inordinate delay in taking the decision?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) There have been requests to Ministry of Textiles from the State Government of Kerala, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Goa for setting up of centres of National Institute of Fashion Technology in their States. These requests are under examination in the Ministry of Textiles.

Import and Export of Power

3666. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there were proposals to import as well as to export power to some of the neighbouring countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to suspend the export of power to neighbouring countries in view of alarming power situation in the country itself; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) The status of exchange of power with neighbouring countries is as follows:

(1) • Bhutan

India is importing power from Chukha Hydro Electric Project in Bhutan for some years. Government of Bhutan also imports power from west Bengal and Assam State Electricity Boards.

(2) Nepal

Power exchange between India and Nepal commenced in October, 1971. The quantum of exchange of power which was initially upto 5 MW has been raised to 50 MW. The exchange of power takes place at 17 places along with Indo-Nepal border through the existing transmission network.

(3) Bangladesh

The Governments of India and Bangladesh have agreed to prepare a joint feasibility report for inter-connection of power systems between Bangladesh and India. The Asian Development Bank has agreed to finance a feasibility study for exchange of power between India and Bangladesh under its Regional Technical Assistance Programme. A Tripartite Meeting has been held at ADB, Manila on 29th and 30th May, 1997 regarding the Project. The project envisages export of surplus power from Eastern region of India to Western Bangladesh. The project also envisages export of surplus power from Eastern Bangladesh to the North Eastern Region of India.

(c) There is no proposal to suspend the export or import of power.

(d) Does not arise.

Committee of KVS on Transfer/Promotion

3667. SHRI B.M. MENSINKAI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Committee or group has been set up to review guidelines governing transfer, promotion etc. of teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas;

(b) if so, its composition and terms of reference;

(c) whether the Committee/group has since submitted its report; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Provision of Uniform for P&T Employees

3668. PROF. RITA VERMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a provision to provide uniforms for different seasons to group 'C' and 'D' employees of Ministry of Communications every year;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware that the uniforms were not provided to such employees in Bihar during the last twelve years;

(c) if so, whether to compensate the non-supply of uniforms to these employees, they were paid Rs. 73.12 lakh in lump-sum in November 1993;

(d) whether the Government are also aware that the employees were given about Rs. 50.83 Lakh as washing allowance for the said period;

(e) if so, whether any responsibility has been fixed for these irregularities;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

Most of the uniforms are provided to Group 'C' and 'D' employees of the Department once in two years both for summer and winter seasons. However, some uniforms are provided to them once in three/ four/five years as prescribed in the enclosed Statement issued by the Department of