

(vii) Need to Improve the tele-communication system in Sunderbans (West Bengal)

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (Joynagar): While nature has been bountiful in giving rich flora and fauna to Sunderbans in West Bengal, the entire area continues to be extremely backward and poverty-ridden. In the context of the present day fast developing tele-communications and micro-wave and satellite links for better communication, this area has been somewhat ignored. Schemes have been prepared but they seem to be gathering dust somewhere in the Department of Telecommunications at the Centre.

The scheme with five long distance public telephones on multi-access rural radio system with base station at Canning—the Gateway to Sunderbans—was likely to be commissioned in March last, but it has not as yet been done. On this depends further opening of long distance public telephones at the remaining places in the area and the State of West Bengal. I would urge for its early execution.

As regards the setting up of a micro-wave station in Sunderbans, the West Bengal Telecom. Circle and proposed the setting up of one 34 MB/S Digital system (420 channel) capacity between Calcutta and Canning during the current plan; but it is still awaiting final examination at the DOT Headquarters in New Delhi and allocation of funds. I will very strongly urge for its early clearance and implementation during this last year of the current plan. Both these systems, when commissioned, will not only boost the tourist traffic but also the economy of this poor and backward Sunderbans area.

[*Translation*]

(viii) Need to direct NAFED to purchase onions in Gujarat to save the farmers from loss

SHRIMATI PATEL RAMABEN RAMJIBHAI MAVANI (Rajkot): Mr. Speaker, Sir, after a severe drought for three succes-

sive years in Gujarat, there has been a good onion crop this year. But from financial point of view, this year too has proved to be a drought year. Due to good harvest, the price of onion has fallen so sharply in the wholesale market that the farmer can just manage to get only the cost of transportation and sometimes even less than that. In my view, the Government should formulate a policy according to which, whenever the prices of commodities fall, the Government agency should intervene without any delay in order to check the prices. Some policy should be formulated to divide the burden of loss borne by the agency.

NAFED or any other Government agency should be directed to purchase onions in Gujarat immediately in the interest of onion growers there.

The Government of Gujarat is ready to bear half the loss borne by NAFED in this work. If the Central Government agrees to bear the remaining loss and direct NAFED to intervene in the matter, then the farmers can be saved.

(ix) Need to ensure regular water supply to the villages of Outer Delhi

SHRI BHARAT SINGH (Outer Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the water in my area—outer Delhi, particularly in Ochandi and Qutabgarh villages is brackish. So, water from Nazafgarh—Haidarpur Tank is supplied there. But there is acute shortage of drinking water in Tikri-Kalan and Hirkudana. Many other villages are also facing acute shortage of drinking water. Drinking water available in all the villages two years ago, but the population of Rohini, Vikaspuri, Paschim Vihar and Pritampura has increased manifold. Most of the water is consumed in these areas. The Haidarpur plant is located in Haidarpur village but the people of this area are deprived of water supply. Another plant should be set up there at the earliest in order to provide drinking water in every village in Delhi. Till then water should be provided