

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS*[English]***Conversion of Defaulted Loans to Shipping Corporation of India into Equity**

*66. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to convert 50 per cent of the defaulted loans to the Shipping Corporation of India into equity; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K P UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) and (b). The Capital Restructuring proposal of Shipping Corporation of India Ltd., which is under consideration of the Government, envisages, among others, conversion of part of the outstanding loans of Shipping Corporation of India due to the Government into equity in order that the debt-equity ratio of the Company is brought to 3 : 1 as on 31.3.89.

Telephone Connections at Manali

*67. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications pending for telephone connections in Manali, district Kulu (Himachal Pradesh);

(b) the steps Government propose to take to clear the waiting list in view of importance of Manali as an international tourist spot; and

(c) the time by which the capacity of the

present exchange will be expanded?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) 89 applications are pending for telephone connections in Manali, District Kulu (Himachal Pradesh).

(b) & (c). A 400 lines electronic exchange (NEAX-61S) has been planned to be installed during the next year 1990-91 to replace the existing manual exchange of 295 lines capacity. There is no proposal for the expansion of the present exchange as it is being replaced by electronic exchange.

Bodo Agitation

*68. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government are considering any new initiatives to contain Bodo agitation in Assam; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMED SAYEED): (a) and (b). Talks are proposed to be held shortly between the Government of Assam and ABSU (UB Group) in the presence of a Central Observer. The Central Government will extend all necessary help and cooperation so that a mutually acceptable solution is reached.

Telecom Commission

*69. SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to have a rethinking over the struc-

ture of the Telecom Commission; if so, on what lines; and

(b) achievements of the Telecom Commission so far in the field of new technology, electronic system and automatisa-tion of rural telephone systems?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRI SHNAN): (a) and (b). A statement is given below.

STATEMENT

1. With a view to promote rapid development of all aspects of telecommunications including technology, production and services, Government has established a Telecom Commission.
2. The Government will soon announce a Communication Policy. The Telecom Commission and their structures will implement this policy in the context of our national efforts towards self-reliance.
3. The achievements of Telecom Commission so far in the field of new technology, electronic system and automatisa-tion of Rural Telephone System are as under:
 - (i) R&D efforts of various organisations have been pooled together to develop new technologies in the areas of Switching Transmission, Software Terminals and networks. Electronic Digital Private Automatic Branch Exchange (EPABX), Rural Digital Automatic Exchange (RAX), Medium Sized Digital Exchange and Large Capacity Digital Exchanges have been developed.
 - (ii) A comprehensive plan for automatisation of Rural Telephone Sys-

tem have been made for implementation.

- (iii) Improved transmission technology for rural areas have also been developed and is being implemented to open more and more Long Distance Public Telephones (LDPTs) in far flung areas.

In the context, structure and framework of this policy, the Government may from time to time, review the work of the Commission and assign specific tasks for achievements within a time frame.

Withdrawal of IPKF from Sri Lanka

- *70. SHRI SRIKANTHA DATTA NARSIMHARAJA WADIYAR:
SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) how much Indian Peace Keeping Force has been withdrawn from Sri Lanka to date;
- (b) the time by which the entire IPKF is to be withdrawn; and
- (c) whether any agreement has been reached with Sri Lanka in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) By the end of the year six of the eight districts of the North-Eastern Province of Sri Lanka will have been vacated by the IPKF.

(b) Government are committed to the de-induction of the IPKF as fast as practicable. Keeping the logistical and other factors in mind, it should be possible to complete de-induction by the end of March 1990.