

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : As regards the efforts made to get the arrears paid, I have myself written twice to the Chief Ministers. The Secretary has also written that the arrears should be paid.

[*English*]

SHRI S.M. GURADDI : Is it not a fact that these mills are running in a heavy loss because of the bad policy of the Government to import sugar from other countries ?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : This is not a fact. With due respect I want to tell you, in framing the sugar policy in the country the Government has to balance a number of interests. One is the interest of the sugarcane growers so that they get adequate price, otherwise they would not grow it. So in reply to your question we have to say 'no'.

Secondly, we have to see the interest of the consumer so that he gets sugar at a reasonable price. Thirdly we have to see that the mills are economically viable. We had to import sugar which we are progressively reducing. We sell sufficient quantity and import as much less sugar as possible. We are considering all these things in the new Sugar Policy in the Seventh Five Year Plan.

SHRI S.M. GURADDI : When will the new Sugar Policy come ? Will it come after the season ?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : So far as the sugar cane minimum price for 1987-88 is concerned, we shall announce it very soon. We are doing this exercise. I think, perhaps, in a few days it will be known.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : The minimum statutory cane price is not at all remunerative and realistic and the several State Governments are announcing statutory price. The Government of India has increased levy sugar price to a great extent. Will the Government come out with a rational policy to pay the cane growers a remunerative price at least now because in some States the growers are going to make agitation to get remunerative

price ? Will the Government come out with that for the cane growers keeping in view the cost of cultivation ?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : The hon. Member is aware that the minimum statutory sugar cane price is fixed as some kind of a support price so that if there is a lot of sugar cane they may at least get that. The price is determined by Central Government in consultation and on the advice of the Agricultural Costs and Price Commission which also takes into consideration various factors. As the hon. Member is aware, in his State and also in other States the actual price on which sugar cane is sold is on the advice of the State Governments. The State Governments advise the sugar mills to purchase sugar cane at a particular price. But actually they have been getting much more price than the minimum price which is fixed. Minimum price is only the support price so that if there is lot of sugar cane, the farmers do not suffer.

[*Translation*]

Setting up of Ultra High Frequency Centre at Pithoragarh

*109. **SHRI HARISH RAWAT :** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the site for the Ultra High Frequency (U.H.F.) centre proposed to be set up at Pithoragarh has been selected;

(b) if so, whether construction work of this centre has since been started; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay and the amount proposed to be spent on the construction work of this centre during the current financial year and the time by which it is likely to be completed ?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) There was a plan to construct a combined Telecom. Building for Telephone Exchange and Ultra High Frequency Station at this site. Due to financial constraints and economy measures adopted by Government of India, it was decided to postpone the construction work of this centre at the above site and go in for rented accommodation. No expenditure is thus expected to be incurred on the construction work during the financial year.

However, the telephone exchange and UHF link will be commissioned by March, 1988, using rented accommodation.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have been asking this question from the Ministry for the last four years... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : God willing, he has three more years to ask the question.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : I want to congratulate the Telecommunications Department that they have been consistent in their reply during the last four years irrespective of the fact that the Ministers have been changing. But this time I am grateful to the hon. Minister—he is quite an efficient person—that at least he has changed the date of commissioning. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the time by which S.T.D. facility to Delhi and Lucknow would be provided from UHF, Pithoragarh after it is commissioned ?

[*English*]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, I fully appreciate the feeling of the hon. Member. It is a longstanding demand and as I said, it is going to be installed by March 1988, if not earlier.

As regards the demand for STD facilities, I will discuss with the hon. Member and I can assure him that I will

take special care so that he gets the facilities there.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : The hon. Minister has replied very politely and, therefore, it appears that I shall have to wait for this S.T.D. facility for another 4 or 5 years.

MR. SPEAKER : He has given a sugar-coated pill.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : I would like to mention that in the matter of telecommunications, Uttar Pradesh is very backward as compared to all the other States and it will take a long time for the State to come at par with the other States. In such a situation, will the hon. Minister state the number of districts in U.P. which are not yet linked with the State Capital, Lucknow, through U.H.F. and microwave link and the steps proposed to be taken to connect these districts with the State capital through U.H.F. and micro-wave link ?

[*English*]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, there are 57 district headquarters in U.P. State and till date 30 district headquarters have already been covered. The work on the remaining 27 district headquarters is in various stages and I assure that within the Seventh Five-Year Plan, all the district headquarters of Uttar Pradesh numbering 57 will be connected with the State Capitals. This is an assurance.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, it has been the pronounced policy of this Government that STD facilities should be given in all the districts. I would like to know how many district headquarters in this country are still without STD facilities. In my district which is Pathanamthitta, there is no STD facility, there is a microwave tower, but STD facility is not there. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that how many district headquarters are yet to be provided with STD facilities and within what time these district headquarters will be provided with these facilities, including my district.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : About the specific district, I will not be able to say right now, but he is very much right that wherever there are electronic exchanges we are trying to cover with STD facilities and in the Seventh Five-Year Plan we are trying to cover almost all the areas. About your particular request, I shall write back to you, I do not have the information right now.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Micro-wave tower is already there.

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : No problem, we will connect it.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAMINDER SINGH : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he has fixed some criterion under which manually operated exchanges in small towns could be converted into automatic exchanges when the number of telephone connections in such a town reaches say 1,000 or 1,500? Has he fixed such a criterion?

MR. SPEAKER : Have you fixed any criteria that after 1,000 or 1,500 telephone connections, manuals would be converted into automatic ones?

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, in the main answer of the question, I have said that in the Seventh Five Year Plan, we propose to have 11 lakh telephone connections. And the process which is being involved is, for the oldest telephone exchange, the earliest is the replacement. If in this category, some of the exchanges of your State come, we shall take care of them.

MR. SPEAKER : Sometimes ago also helps!

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, just like TV, the Communication Department is producing so many small auto exchanges with 10 or 12 telephone lines. But it is a fact that all these

telephones are not working properly and the exchanges are not working properly. Merely in transferring one small operator from one place to another, there is no difference. I am myself is a victim of this non-functioning. I am from the rural area and I never got a call matured, even the lightning call, from Delhi to my residence.

Because of the fact that rural exchanges are not working properly, may I know that before you produce so many more exchanges, would you kindly ensure that the auto exchanges are functioning properly?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, in our country, 70% of the population is living in rural areas and we trying to give more exchanges in rural areas. As a matter of fact, our policy is to introduce 10-line automatic exchanges. Now, we are giving only 25 lines and we are not giving any manual exchange where the lines are less than 100.

As regards the functioning, as I said, more automatic exchanges will be given with modern facilities and the trouble that you are facing now will be overcome by the end of the 7th Five Year Plan.

Private Sector Participation in Power Generation

*111. **SHRI HARIHAR SOREN† :**
PROF. K.V. THOMAS :

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any proposal to set up additional capacity to generate 3000 MW power in the private sector during the Seventh Five Year Plan;

(b) whether the private participation proposed to be permitted to such an extent is in accordance with the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956; and

(c) if not, the reasons for allowing this departure from the approved policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE