

LOK SABHA DEBATES

1

LOK SABHA

*Wednesday, November 18, 1987/
Kartika 27, 1909 (SAKA)*

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI (Mand-
saur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today Shri
Dandavate is absent. It may kindly be
taken note of.

MR. SPEAKER: His absence is very
unlikely. Shri Kamal Nath.

[*English*]

Centre for Advanced Computer
Technology

*167. SHRI KAMAL NATH: Will
the PRIME MINISTER be Pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contem-
plating to set up some centres for advanced
computer technology;

(b) if so, the venues and financial
implications involved;

(c) the names of State Governments
that have offered to set up such centres and
the amount of financial help asked for by
each State; and

(d) the total financial involvement for
the settling up of computer centres includ-
ing that of the States?

2

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECH-
NOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE
IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN
DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY,
ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K.R.
NARAYANAN): (a) to (d) A Statement
is given below.

Statement

(a) The Government is setting up a
Centre for Development of Advanced Com-
puting Technology (C-DACT). There is
also a proposal for development of a
parallel processing computer for special
applications by Tate Institute of Funda-
mental Research (TIFR) and Centre for
Development of Telematics (C-DOT).

(b) The venue for C-DACT is Pune
and the cost of the project is estimated at
Rs. 37 crores for a three year period.

(c) No proposals to set up centres for
advanced computer technology have been
received from State Governments.

(d) The Government is also setting up
a network of computer centres called NIC
NET in all the State Capitals/Union
Territories and District Headquarters to
create information processing facilities for
use by both States as well as Central
Government departments. Each District
Centre would cost about Rs. 5 lakhs
including the computer and earth station
for satellite link. The State level computer
centres would cost Rs. 80 lakhs each. The
total financial involvement for setting up
this network (NIC NET) is Rs. 120 crores.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: With the
advent of the super computer and other
very large main-frame computers, it is
necessary to set up centres for advance
computer technology, for design and
development of downstream ancillary pro-
grammes and processes. Is the Centre

which is being set up in Pune compatible with all that and will one centre be enough because there is only one approved centre costing about Rs. 37 crores—take into consideration all the aspects of downstream ancillarisation programme which are very important to get full mileage from the super computer and other very large main-frame computers? You want to get full mileage from them. So, will the Centre at Pune be enough?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : One centre will not be enough. Actually we are setting up one more centre. There is a very active proposal from the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and C-DOT to develop another super computer based on parallel processing.

I also think there is scope for a number of other centres depending upon groups of experts we can assemble, a centre for development can be created, around such groups.

As regards the downstream development we are of course engaged in the absorption, familiarisation and development of computer technology at every level. Our major problem is in the frontier areas. In other downstream areas we are engaged in a large effort with regard to components, and the matter of absorbing as well as developing technologies of our own.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : The Government is also setting up a network of computer centres at the State capitals and at the district level. It is very good. The question is, what kind of information would these district centres disseminate and what is the utility of them. Linking up of satellite is all very well. But how will this help in the growth and development, by when will these district centres be set up, is there any programme or district-wise time-table or schedule or is it just wishful thinking?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : It is not wishful thinking. First of all, it is not just a question of district centres; it is a question of computer centre network in Delhi, in certain regions and in the State Capitals and in the districts being linked together by satellite communication.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : He has come, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER : Now your doubt has been removed.

MR. SPEAKER : I had already told you that.

[English]

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : I don't know what is the matter, is it a laughter on a question? (Interruptions).

As regards the utility, the informatic system is collecting a wide variety of information for socio-economic planning. I am sure you are aware that though we have a lot of data in our Planning Commission and in other Ministries and Departments. Data is still very incomplete particularly data from the district and rural areas whether it is about agricultural production, working of the treasury, health statistics, performance of IRDP, NREP, etc. Of all these basic important programmes that we have launched we have imperfect information. If this information is available in a systematic manner is available it will help us in our larger planning from the Planning Commission as well as in monitoring.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : Even districts have no knowledge of the Centre.

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : That is why we are communicating both ways. This is not a one way channel. It is a two-way channel because districts can ask questions through the computer which can be answered from the State level and vice versa.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : By when?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : We have established this in 12 districts, namely, Udaipur, Cuttack, Quilaon, Thane, Betul, Kanpur, Calcutta, Chittoor, Patiala and Hazaribagh. They are already operational.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAT : In some of the block headquarters computer

system has been introduced as in my constituency Kishangarh Bas but at the district level Zila Parishad has not been provided with this system. So the feed back which should be given to the block development area is not being given by the Zila Parishad. May I know whether he will ensure that Zila Parishad should be provided these facilities of computer system? I would also like to thank the hon. Prime Minister for inducting the super-computer into the Indian technology by linking with the US XMP-IVX. Will the benefit of this be given to the rural areas? What is the programme of the Ministry in this respect?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : As regards extending it further to the whole of district we can certainly look into it. But let us make it operational at the district level and we can have terminals for collecting the information. Actually the job of the district computer system is to collect information from all over the district including the sillages. With regard to the utility of the super-computer that we have established whether it will have any benefit to the ordinary people, as you know, the super-computer we are getting is for a specific purpose for weather forecasting, for medium term whether forecasting and agricultural and meteorological purposes. This will actually help farmers in getting right information about rainfall and other important matters affecting agriculture.

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the U.S. businessmen dealing with super-computer equipments are shy of investment in India with regard to manufacture of computers because they do not want strict regulations with regard to policy of foreign investment in India being imposed on them. If so, whether Government would consider liberalising the policy regarding the foreign investment regulations so that computer technology in the country could gain at faster rate and our country could keep pace with other advanced countries in the field of computer technology? Also whether the Government would consider funding for computer oriented research projects in the private sector so that indigenous production of computer equipment is encouraged?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : Sir, our investment policy has been considerably liberalised. We have a series of collaborations with the US and other computer manufacturing countries for producing sophisticated computers in India. For example, in ECIL in Hyderabad, we are co-operating with Norsk Data and also with the Control Data Corporation of the United States for producing somewhat sophisticated computers. I have not come across really any shyness on the part of the computer companies from abroad in investing in India. Some of them may be shy at higher levels of technology. But as regards helping the private sector, we have liberalised our policies so much, so that the expansion of computer manufacturing in the private sector has increased tremendously. In fact, 150 per cent increase in the last one year in terms of physical production of computers has taken place in the country as a whole. We are prepared to help the private companies if they come to us with specific proposals. I think they have enough capital to do this kind of thing. We are encouraging them to indulge in actual R & D work, not only in manufacturing but in research and development in the private sector when they import computers so that we will acquire indigenous knowledge.

Task Force to Review the Progress of Major Projects

*168 **SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE :**
SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN :

Will the Minister of PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government have since set up a Task Force to undertake an indepth review of the progress of carrying out major projects in all sectors and to assess the utilisation of funds ;

(b) if so, whether the force has started functioning ; and

(c) will it be able to produce the desired results ?