

range of projects which are funded from external sources for 1987-88 ;

(b) if so, the total number of projects which are awaiting clearance from Government;

(c) the external sources offering aid to fund the projects ; and

(d) the number of projects likely to be started in 1988-89 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) to (d). The requisite information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Sidal ..No supplementary ? Shri Jagannath Patnaik... absent. Next Question.

Coordination between Departments of Electronics and Telecommunications

*374. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proper coordination has been established between the Department of Electronics and the Department of Telecommunications for the adoption of a suitable technology for providing telecom facilities in the rural areas on the one hand and on the other for keeping pace with the latest advances in the field of electronics and telecommunications in the world ;

(b) if so, the nature thereof and a brief outline of the steps taken in this regard ;

(c) if not, whether such a coordination would be established ; and

(d) the role of the relevant missions set up by Government for this purpose recently ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE 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) Yes, Sir.

(b) In close coordination between Department of Electronics (DOE) and Department of Telecommunications (DOT), the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) has been established, which is funded equally by the two Departments. C-DOT has successfully developed the Electronic Rural Automatic Exchange (ERAX) and is in the process of completing the development of the Electronic Switching Systems (ESS) based on state-of-the-art technology. Coordination between DOE and DOT takes place continuously through discussions in the Electronics Commission and in various joint committees at various levels. Recently a High Powered Monitoring Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary (DOT), of which Secretary (DOE) is also a member for monitoring implementation and progress of indigenous production of telecommunication equipment.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) A technology Mission "Better Communications" has been launched with the Department of Telecommunications as the nodal agency to achieve the following objectives in the field of telecommunications :

(i) Improvement in the quality of service.

(ii) Improvement in the accessibility within the existing network.

(iii) Concentrated attention to indigenous development of selected technologies and products.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Sir, may I invite the attention of the hon. Minister, through you, to part 2 of the (d) section of the statement? It is "improvement in the accessibility within the existing network."

Sir, in the rural areas the existing network is not as efficient and as clear as it is in the metropolitan areas. So, with this end in view, whenever we approach the Department of Telecommunications, they inform us that the provision of accessibility and upgrading of this depends upon the constraint of resources. So, will the Minister let us know whether no constraint of resources would be allowed to stand in the way of improvement in the accessibility within the existing network as given in the Statement ?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : Resources are always at constraint. But actually this part of the question relates to the Ministry of Telecommunication. But as far as the development of technology for providing telephone exchanges and telephone connections to rural areas is concerned, we have more or less accomplished the mission which has been entrusted to us, through C-DOT, and the ITI, Technology Research Division has also developed an Exchange system as well as connections for meeting this problem.

As regards resources, I think, it will be possible for us to mobilise the resources and discussions are going on between the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Telecommunication and they have also been authorised to raise funds from the open market.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : In view of the development of C-DOT technology, will it be possible to introduce Integrated Digital Network (IDN) in the rural areas, as it is available in other areas ?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : Yes, Sir. It will be possible. Already C-DOT has developed what is called, Electronic Rural Automatic Exchanges. This has already been given to certain Public Sector firms for production. They have a very ambitious plan of providing one ERAX every day for the rural areas.

The ITI Research Division, TRC has also produced an exchange which is suitable for the rural areas. I think, with this and with the larger ones, which are being tested, it would be possible to provide,

within the constraint of funds, what is required in the rural areas.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : The hon. Minister has said that C-DOT has successfully developed Electronic Rural Automatic Exchange and is in the process of completion of development of ESS, Electronic Switching System. I would like to ask the hon. Minister, how he compares it cost-wise and quality-wise with the imported equipment and imported system. If it is cheaper, as has been said, then why are we still going for the import of electronic switching system ?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : As far as costs are concerned, C DOT system is definitely cheaper than the imported system. But as has been said in the answer, we have developed it and this system is undergoing field trials, at the moment. In the interim period, we need some importation. Actually, the imported technology is already there in Mankhapur Factory of the ITI. Under the French technology, we are developing that switching system. C-DOT system will be cheaper than this. And it is for the immediate requirements and for the Plan target that we have been compelled to import some of the lines from abroad.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH : At the very outset, I would like to congratulate the Government because I personally feel that C-DOT has done excellent work, as far as indigenisation goes and curbing of the imports which were always taking place in telecommunications. But as far as communications go and the linkages with the Electronics Ministry, I would like to know, is it advisable to have officers who started in the Electronics Ministry when it was initiated to be there even today. Is that one of the modes of improving communication with other Ministries ?

About part (b) of the Question, in the rural areas, unfortunately there is a terrific power shortage and other facilities also are not available like air-conditioning. For some of the electronic exchanges, air-conditioning is a must. Would the Government look into the aspect of renewable forms of energy in these rural areas where there is intermittent power supply.

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : As far as the officers are concerned, I think, there is a normal reorganisation and changes going on. As in every Department, there is a mix of the old and the new depending upon the experience they have and the new expertise we require. There is no rigid rule. But we believe in reorganisation and changing personnel from time to time.

The other question raised by the hon. Member is about using non-conventional sources of energy. It is going on. Solar energy is being thought of. But it has not been achieved on a significant scale.

One more point is raised by the hon. Member.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : That is congratulations.

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : Thank you.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : The Department of Electronics and the Electronics Commission were set up when the development of electronics was just taking place. It has so happened over a period of time that electronics has come to everything whether it is heater or whether it is juicer.

So, would the Government now examine what role of the Electronics Commission and the Department of Electronics should play 20 year or 10 years after formation. Now, every Department of the Government has to make a reference and a cross-reference to this Apex Body, the Department of Electronics or the Electronics Commission. They could have their own electronics expertise in their Department which should be able to assess what they need in that direction rather than making cross-references all the time to the Electronics Commission or the Electronics Department who would certify. "This is on ; this is off."

Will this be reviewed in the light of electronics being something of day to day use or hour to hour use almost ?

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN : Electronics are a very high-level technology. I do not think it would be possible for us to

try to establish in every Ministry, an Electronics Division or the expertise to deal with this. I think, we would be frittering away our resources and we will not receive significant results if we do that. It is necessary to have a very knowledgeable expert body to look into everything and react with every Department. There are Committees and Bodies which have been set up to understand the requirements of these Departments.

I agree with the hon. Member that electronics has entered almost every field of life. But we cannot have electronics expertise for developing these things in every field of life, or Department. Therefore, having a Central mechanism of Electronics Department as well as the Electronics Commission, reacting with the Ministries like the Tele-Communication Ministry and research laboratories and research institutions in an essential requirement for success in this field.

Non-availability of SC/ST Candidates for Recruitment

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*375. **SHRI RAM SWAROOP RAM :**

SHRI A. CHARLES :

Will the **PRIME MINISTER** be pleased to state :

(a) whether in its latest report, the UPSC has observed that it could not recommend any person belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for appointment in case of a number of posts to be filled by interview as no application has been received from candidates belonging to the respective category during 1985-86 ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether such a situation arose in the last three years also ; and

(d) the remedial measures proposed in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (d). A statement is given below.