

strain on our foreign exchange resources. So, I want to know whether as a result of putting up captive power plants and meeting the requirements, for instance, of Bharat Petroleum which has increased its capacity by 6 million tonnes per year there this will be saving of foreign exchange ?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : With regard to the hon. Member's comment that the Ministry is studying the economics of it, it is not true. In part (b) we have stated : "Yes Sir, Overall economics are in favour of captive power plants." Therefore, I am in agreement with what the hon. Member says. So far as the question of putting up a captive power plant at Bharat Refineries we are for it and this is for consideration of the government and we are seriously considering this.

SHRI Y.S. MAHAJAN : May I know whether these power plants would be financed by the Central Government or they would be financed by the internal resources of the refinery ?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : The financing would be done by the internal resources of the refinery.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI MANORMA SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am satisfied with the reply given by the hon. Minister.

[*English*]

Allotment of Telephones on Out-of-Turn Priority to Ministers of Karnataka Government

* 740. **SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER :** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of applications received from August, 1984 for allotment of telephones on out-of-turn priority in Bangalore city;

(b) the basis on which telephones were given on out-of-turn priority;

(c) whether the Ministers of State Government come under out-of-turn priority list; and

(d) whether Ministers of Karnataka Government were denied telephone facilities on out-of-turn priority ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) 113 requests were received for out-of-turn allotment of telephones in Bangalore from August, 1984 till 30th April, 1985.

(b) Telephone connections were sanctioned on out-of-turn basis, in deserving cases, taking into account the loading position of the exchanges.

(c) Telephone requirements of Ministers in their official capacity are met by the concerned Ministry/Department of the State Government, who register for telephone connections in 'OYT-Special' category. Priority can be accorded for provision of such telephone connections.

(d) No, Sir. Priority demands for the Ministers of Karnataka Government were met in consultation with the Chief Secretary of the State Government.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER : The answer to No. (d) is far from truth. I am speaking with authority. I was in the Government then when I was a Minister. Many of the Ministers did not get telephone. Some telephones were withdrawn from certain officers and given to Ministers later on. You don't have proper guidelines for giving of telephone to the Ministers. May I know this ? What are the criteria ? What are the guidelines ? How do you decide the cases of 'deserving ones' ? You said in reply about 'deserving cases'. Well, what are the guidelines and criteria in the matter of giving telephone connections ? Who will decide which case is a deserving case ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : The area where the State Government offices are located and the Ministers and important Government functionaries reside in Bangalore is served by the Central Telephone Exchange of Bangalore Telephones. This exchange is an old one. It has a capacity of 13150 lines out of which an equipment of 3300 lines has already been scrapped for replacement. The exchange is loaded to the extent of 94.77 per cent. So, sometimes the problem arises as to how much we can give from this exchange. Well, Sir, 43 requests were received from the State Government. In consultation with the Chief Secretary of the State Government they were conceded. 18 connections were given out of which the State Government and the Chief Secretary gave only 10 for the Ministers. The system is this. We are always in constant consultation with the State Government. We tell them how much we can spare from a certain exchange at a particular time. How they distribute among themselves is the concern of the State Government.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER : What he says pertains to the connection of the officers. But what about the residence of the Ministers? Where I was residing there was no load on the exchange. I sent for the officer. He said that in the guidelines there was no priority for the Minister. But now you say, there is priority for the Minister. The Officer then said that there is no priority for the Minister. So I would like to know what is the correct position.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : If the State Government...

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : Now he ceases to be a Minister. What does he want?

MR. SPEAKER : Hope is life. Life depends upon hope.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : Mr. Hegde has fortunately sent him here,

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : If the State Government wants to provide official telephone to the residences of Ministers, there is no problem. Even for MLAs and MLCs we have priority. There is no question of Minister not getting it unless the State Government...

MR. SPEAKER : People themselves have given them priority. The problem is this.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER : Let the Minister get a reply from the Chief Secretary. Then he will understand the position.

MR. SPEAKER : No third question please.

—Shri Kishore Chandra Deo—absent.

—Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munsii—absent.

—The Question hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Conversion of Barren Land into Fertile Land

*709. **DR. CHANDRA SHEKHAR TRIPATHI :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to convert the entire barren land in the country into fertile land by 2000 AD ;

(b) if so, whether Government are formulating any programme in this regard ; and

(c) if so, the outlines thereof and if not, how Government propose to tackle this problem ?