

supplementary and, possibly, it does not arise from the main question. I would like to say that a few days back, in reply to a question in this very House, I had stated that imports are being restricted to only those items which are immediately needed. As I told you earlier, whether it is digital or electronic exchange, it is our endeavour to see that more and more of these are manufactured indigenously. Besides, we have entrusted a big responsibility of manufacturing telephone instruments to the private sector also. Thus, public and private sector both are engaged in unison to manufacture more and more instruments indigenously so that quality telephone service could be provided in the country.

[English]

SHRI D. N. REDDY : Would the Hon. Minister inform the House whether it is a fact that Government is giving priority in sanctioning telephone connections to those who register themselves under the OYT special quota and if so, the details thereof ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : We have got a list of priorities and whenever new numbers in exchanges are released for allocation, there is a certain percentage which goes to OYT and there is a certain percentage which goes to non-OYT. In OYT there are special categories like industries and others. So, there is a very well laid-out procedure which is known to everybody. We have discussed it in the Telephone Advisory Committee and Hon. Members know about it, what percentage goes to OYT and non-OYT, about special quota to subscribers and priority in allocation.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI : May I know whether the Minister is aware of the fact that there is not only hue and cry but almost there is a commotion and protests raised by people after having seen that public corporations have been formed in Bombay and Delhi isolating Calcutta, which is the worst telephone system not only in India but in the whole of Asia. (An Hon. Member : whole world). The crossbar exchange and digital system in Calcutta has been described by scientists and technologists as "abandoned". This is the situation we

see in spite of the import of technology and import of materials and other things. Will you take special measures within this year to see that Calcutta telephone system comes up to the mark keeping in view the huge investments you are making ? Will you personally take initiative, I would like to know ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : We are very much conscious of the requirements of Calcutta so far as the telephone system is concerned. We are giving top priority to it. And if you take it in a proportional way, much more than the other metropolitan cities, we are giving priority to Calcutta. In the list before me, when we established digital local exchanges, in Calcutta Central II 10,000 lines were commissioned this year and another exchange was commissioned only this week. Looking to the demand there, a very large proportion of the demand has to be met and I can assure the Hon. Member through you that the needs of Calcutta are very much in our mind and we are trying to improve the system.

Grant of licences for polyester fibre

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*269. **SHRI S. G. GHOLAP :**
SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have licensed about 1,50,000 tonnes of additional capacity for polyester fibre in recent years; and

(b) if so, whether it has resulted in an increased demand for import of viscose staple fibre ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) Since January, 1985, a total additional capacity of 1,85,000 tonnes for the manufacture of Polyester Staple Fibre has been approved.

(b) Both Viscose Staple Fibre and Cotton are blended with Polyester Staple Fibre. The question of increased demand for import of viscose staple fibre would depend on the

increase in production as and when approved capacity of Polyester Staple Fibre materialises as well as indigenous availability of Cotton and Viscose Staple Fibre for blending.

SHRI S. G. GHOLAP : The additional capacity already sanctioned is 1 lakh 85 thousand units. How many gross route units are coming up and where and with what capacity? How many of them will be in Maharashtra and where? What will be its effect on cotton consumption?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI) : 7 units have been licenced for manufacturing of viscose fibre. One is in Andhra Pradesh. It is Andhra Pradesh Rayons Ltd. It is in Warangal, Andhra Pradesh. Then we have Bihar State Pharmaceutical and Chemicals Development Corporation Ltd. It is in notified backward area of Bihar. Then we have Golden Tobacco Company. It is in Rajnandgaon Madhya Pradesh. Then we have Gwalior Rayon Silk Manufacturing Co. Ltd. It is in Kumarapatnam, Karnataka. Then we have Modi Fibre Ltd. It is in notified backward Area, Maharashtra. Then you have South Indian Viscose Ltd. Tehsil Mettupalayam, District Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Then we have UP State Textile Corporation. It is in notified backward area of UP. Modi Fibres Limited is being set up in Maharashtra. It has been licenced in Maharashtra. Letter of intent has been issued for 30,000 tonnes capacity.

SHRI S. G. GHOLAP : There is a lot of scope for petro chemicals in Maharashtra. May I know whether any training centre is established in that area?

SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI : Sir, the Hon. Member might be aware that we are having a Maharashtra gas cracker complex with an investment of more than Rs. 1000 crores in the Konkan region of Maharashtra, and that other chemical units are also coming up. Of course, each unit will have its own trading unit centre. That is our thinking.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister in his reply has stated two

things. Firstly, since January 1985 alone a total additional capacity of 1,85,000 tonnes for the manufacture of polyester staple fibre has been approved.

The second point made in his reply was that cotton also can be blended with this. Sir, I want to know whether the Minister has noticed that the tendency of blending of cotton with fibre has been decreased noticeably in the last few years, and whether this will not affect the interests of cotton growers in the country. Secondly, if they have sanctioned the capacity of 1,85,000 tonnes additionally for polyester staple fibre, what is the additional capacity they have sanctioned for visco staple fibre? I would like to know whether it is not a fact that Birlas alone enjoy monopoly in regard to visco staple fibre with their Gwalior Rayon plant having a capacity of 80,000 tonnes.

SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI : Sir, the Hon. Member is perhaps aware of the fact that polyester staple fibre is a fibre which belongs to the family of man-made non-cellulosic fibre. This fibre has an inherent character of blendability and is blended with most of the fibres like cotton and viscose. The Hon. Member is referring to the lessening demand of cotton mixed polyester staple fibre. That depends on the demands that consumers have in this sector. I am not aware of the fact that actually blending is decreasing, but I will certainly enquire into it since the Hon. Member has this information.

As far as additional capacity for visco fibre goes, we have already issued letters of intent for 170,000 tonnes of capacity for visco staple and we hope that these units will come up and therefore, any monopoly will be broken.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the import of polyester fibre and manufacture of cloth therefrom is proving detrimental to the interest of farmers in the country. Ours is an agriculture country, but the import has resulted in a slump in cotton consumption. The cotton mills which spin cotton yarn and manufacture cloth are gradually becoming sick. What type of policy

have the Government framed in the interest of the farmer? I would like the Hon. Minister to clarify that the consumption of cotton will not fall. We are apprehensive that this will result in reduction of cotton consumption and will adversely affect the interests of the farmers.

SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI : I agree that the type of apprehensions expressed by the Hon. Member here just now, though unfounded, do exist in some parts of the country. If the Hon. Member happens to take the trouble of going through the Textile Policy announced in this House, he will come to know that it has been categorically stated therein that cloth requirements of the country are going to increase and per capita consumption of cloth would also go up to such an extent that there would be scope for more production of cotton and apart from cotton, there would be scope for fibre also. Although it is not my department—there is a separate department of Textiles for this and a Competent Minister will be there as incharge of this Department—yet I would like to request the Hon. Member to study the Textile Policy and, I am sure, his apprehension will be belied.

MR. SPEAKER : Both of you may sit together and have consultations because the Textile Policy so far has not been that good.

[English]

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : The new textile policy is not being properly explained. There was a restriction on the proportion of fibre which could be mixed with cotton. Now, that restriction is removed by you.

Policy regarding 'No Industry Districts'

*272. **SHRI D. B. PATIL :**
SHRI MADAN PANDEY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Maharashtra has requested the Union Government for reconsideration of

the policy as regards No Industry Districts and to adopt 'No Industry Tehsil' policy; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Union Government in this matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) and (b). A Statement is given below.

Statement

Government of Maharashtra have requested the Union Government to change the criterion of 'No-Industry District' to 'No-Industry Taluk'. Government have constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee to review and revise the existing scheme for industrialisation of Backward Areas including 'No-Industry Districts'. The Committee shall, inter-alia, consider the suggestion for adoption of Taluka as a criterion for identification of 'No-Industry'/Backward Areas. The Committee is likely to submit its report by the end of this year.

SHRI D. B. PATIL : Sir, in the reply the Minister has said that the Government have constituted an inter-Ministerial committee to review and revise the existing scheme for industrialisation of Backward Areas including 'No-industry Districts'.

I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, when has this committee been constituted and till what time, the term is extended ?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, an inter-Ministerial committee was constituted to revise the formula for backward areas. It was formed in 1982 and the term of the committee... (Interruptions.) The term of the Committee has been extended up to the end of December, 1986.

SHRI D. B. PATIL : Sir, the Hon. Minister has stated that the committee has been constituted in 1982. I want to know, how many meetings have taken place and what are the reasons for delay in submitting reports.