

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) :** (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In order to accelerate the pace of research on high yielding strains of different crops in the country, it was considered necessary to organise researches on all-India basis by pooling the available resources. With this object in view the Indian Council of Agricultural Research have formulated a number of coordinated research projects some of which have already been sanctioned by the Government of India and put into operation and others are likely to be implemented shortly.

#### HIGH-YIELDING VARIETIES PROGRAMME

\*756. **SHRI ESWARA REDDY :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any plan has been prepared for increasing the acreage under the high-yielding varieties programme in the States during the next Kharif season;

(b) if so, the extent of increase planned in each State; and

(c) the extent of additional production likely as a result of the plan ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) :** (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. (*Placed in Library. See No. LT-529/68.*)

**श्री रवि राय :** अध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने कहा है कि अगले कुछ सालों के बाद देश अन्न के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर हो जायेगा और श्री मोरारजी देसाई ने भी जब उन्होंने जनरल वजट के डिबेट का जवाब

दिया था तो उन्होंने भी सदन से इस बात का वायदा किया था कि 1970-71 के बीच में देश खाद्यान्न के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर हो जायगा तो मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि वह इस लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति के लिए क्या-क्या ठोस कदम उठा रहे हैं वह इस सदन को बतलायें ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** The question is a very wide one. But I may say that our main reliance is on improved seed, application of research achievements and supply of inputs like adequate fertilisers, water and so on.

**SHRI RANGA :** What about insecticides ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** That is also there.

**श्री रवि राय :** मैं मंत्री महोदय को याद दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि गाडगिल साहब जोकि प्लानिंग कमिशन के उपाध्यक्ष हैं उन्होंने एक महीने पहले इस आशय का एक बयान दिया था कि जो योजना या खोज हो रही है वह सिर्फ जिस इलाके में सिंचाई की व्यवस्था अभी तक हो चुकी है उस इलाके के लिए यह खोज आदि हो रही है या देश में जो 26 करोड़ एकड़ कृषि लायक जमीन है जिसमें से कोई 5 एकड़ जमीन अभी तक सिंचित होती है तो जो 26 करोड़ एकड़ जमीन अभी तक सिंचित नहीं हुई है उस के बारे में अगले तीन, चार साल के लिए क्या खास खास कदम जो गाडगिल साहब ने कहा है वह इस मिलसिले में सिंचाई के लिए उठा रहे हैं ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** The impression that all our programmes are confined to only irrigated lands, which are about 20 per cent, as has been mentioned by the hon. Member, is not correct. In the broad strategy of the agricultural programme, even non-irrigated lands are involved. The hon. Member is asking me whether

there is a programme for developing minor irrigation or other irrigation. That is in fact beside the question. But I may say that there are programmes and we are laying adequate emphasis on irrigation facilities.

**SHRI D. C. SHARMA :** Experience all the world over shows that these high-yielding varieties of seed are high-yielding up to a limit, and after that, diminishing returns set in. These varieties put a great deal of pressure not only on the inputs, fertiliser and the like, but also on the land. May I know how long these high-yielding varieties will go on yielding this high percentage of yield and when will the land become sub-normal so that it will start yielding less than what it used to before ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** There are no limitations on the development of science. In fact, as far as the yield potential is concerned, already we have achieved 5 tonnes per hectare. Under the research activities undertaken at the IARI, it would be possible to increase the potential to as much as 10 tonnes per hectare. We are making progress so far as that is concerned. There is no reason why the hon. Member should fear that there are limitations in that there will not be development beyond a particular limit.

**श्री बेणी शंकर शर्मा :** जहाँ तक मुझे स्मरण है माननीय खाद्य मंत्री ने इस सदन में कई बार कहा है कि 1971 तक हम खाद्यान्न में आत्मनिर्भर हो जायेंगे। अब कृषि वैज्ञानिकों की यह भविष्यवाणी हमारे दिल में एक तरह से दहशत सी उत्पन्न कर रही है। तो क्या माननीय मंत्री महोदय यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि हम इन वैज्ञानिकों की बात का विश्वास करें या उन की बात का ?

क्या मैं उन से यह प्रार्थना करूँ कि जहाँ तक खाद्यान्न के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर होने का सवाल है हमारे देश में सबसे बड़ी आवश्यकता

जिस बात की है वह है पानी। बिहार में बहुत जगह अभी तक पानी खेतों में नहीं पहुँचाया गया है तो क्या मंत्री महोदय इस बात का आश्वासन देंगे कि आगामी 2-3 वर्षों में बिहार और देश के हर एक खेत में पानी पूरी मात्रा में पहुँचाया जायेगा।

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** As far as the first part is concerned, Government are sincerely trying to attain self-sufficiency in foodgrains during the next few years. As to whether every field would be covered by minor irrigation, it will not be possible to do so. But as I have submitted, adequate emphasis is being laid on minor and major irrigation facilities.

**श्री रामावतार शास्त्री :** मंत्री महोदय ने देश में उपज बढ़ाने वाले राग तैयार करने के मिलसिले में अनुसंधान केन्द्रों की चर्चा की है। तो, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो अनुसंधान केन्द्र खोले गये हैं हमारे देश के अन्दर, उन की कुल तादाद कितनी है और कितने राज्यों में इस तरह के अनुसंधान केन्द्र खोले गये हैं तथा जो राज्य अविकसित हैं और जहाँ गल्ला कम पैदा होता है वहाँ भी क्या इस तरीके के अनुसंधान केन्द्र खोलने की कोई योजना सरकार के सामने विचाराधीन है ? यदि हाँ, तो उस योजना की रूपरेखा क्या है ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** We are relying mainly on improved and new strains of paddy and wheat. These are being tried all over the country including Bihar from which the hon. Member comes. As regards the yield potential, in terms of the experience of the last two years, most of our estimates are proving successful and the plans are succeeding as earlier chalked out. We have already large number of research stations spread all over the country.

**SHRI K. SURYANARAYANA :** May I know whether the Government is aware of the difficulties experienced by farmers in the development of agriculture through the new high-yielding varieties? There is a large number of agriculturists with small holdings who have not been able to adopt new techniques for want of credit facilities. Secondly, in order to enable the States to execute the minor irrigation schemes, will the Government see to it that sufficient financial assistance is given to the States in time? Several States including Andhra Pradesh have submitted so many minor irrigation schemes. But even in the Budget I find that sufficient funds have not been provided whereas States like Andhra are asked to give their surplus paddy to other States.

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** As far as provision of adequate credit facilities to small holders is concerned, the problem exists. As the hon. Member has rightly pointed out, the problem is very much there. But now the Reserve Bank has taken a decision to see that as far as the high-yielding variety is concerned credit facility is made available to small holders also; and efforts are being made to remove all the bottle-necks. As regards financial assistance to States in regard to minor irrigation the existing pattern is that 60 per cent is provided by loan, 15 per cent by way of grant to State Governments and the State Governments have to provide only 25 per cent. Adequate provision has been made in the Central Budget to assist the State Governments.

**SHRI D. N. PATODIA :** Sir, recently a survey was conducted by the Reserve Bank of India according to which by 1975 our food requirements will be 152 million tonnes and the population would cross 630 million. May I know whether, according to the Government, by 1975 we shall be able to produce 152 million tonnes. Secondly, with this production target, may I know what would be the

requirement of fertiliser and irrigation potentiality and whether we shall be able to achieve these requirements?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** Various groups of experts who are now working in the various projections are coming out with different figures. We are proceeding on the basis that by 1970-71 we should have 120 million tonnes. There is a wide disparity between the various figures given, and I do not want to bring in that controversy on the floor of the House. According to the figure which has been more or less agreed to by various experts, we should have as far as possible by 1970-71, 120 million tonnes of foodgrains and the input for fertiliser should be to the tune of 4 million tonnes. That is the broad outline provided by the experts.

**SHRI D. N. PATODIA :** What is the expectation by 1975?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** Sometimes the experts proceed on the basis of what would be the requirement per adult and whether it would be in terms of cereals and pulses or the calorific intake. Some of the experts have mentioned a figure of 133 million tonnes by 1975.

**SHRI R. BARUA :** May I know whether the Government of India is sending out a team to organise and execute the irrigation plans in the various States and to ensure better use of high-yielding crops and better use of fertiliser?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** Central teams visit the States from time to time and all these activities are coordinated. As far as the implementation is concerned, it is entirely within the jurisdiction of the State Governments.

श्री शारदानन्द : मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि जब किसानों को ऋण देने की व्यवस्था उन्होंने की है लैंड मार्गोज बैंक्स के

द्वारा तब क्या सरकार कोई मूल्यांकन पुस्तिका तैयार करेगी ताकि काश्तकारों को ऋण मिलने में सुविधा रहे ? अभी तक स्थिति यह है कि उन को ऋण मिलने में कठिनाई रहती है, वह इधर उधर पैसा बरबाद करते हैं और जितना ऋण उन को मिलता है उस से ज्यादा पैसा खर्च हो जाता है। क्या सरकार इस तरह की कोई योजना बनायेगी कि काश्तकारों की जमीनों का मूल्यांकन हो और मूल्यांकन पुस्तिका उन को दे दी जाय तथा वह को-ऑपरेटिव बैंकों से सीधा हिमाब-किताब कर लें।

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** There is no lack of policy approach from the Centre. In fact, some of the land mortgage banks, for instance, in Andhra and Gujarat, are working very satisfactorily, and the land mortgage bank in the State of the hon. Member can follow that.

**SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH :** By vigorously pursuing this high-yielding variety programme Government hope that they will be able to make a breakthrough in agricultural production. Agricultural production and self-sufficiency in foodgrains could be achieved only when it is tackled in a package manner—remunerative prices, credit facilities, processing and marketing. May I know whether the Government is trying to take a comprehensive view of the matter and appoint an Agricultural Commission, on the lines of the Royal Agricultural Commission constituted previously so that this programme may not be dealt with in a piece-meal manner? It is very necessary to create incentive among the farmers. If the prices fall down, there is every possibility of not achieving that self-sufficiency in view of the piece-meal policies that are being pursued by the Government. Have they given thought to this aspect of the matter?

**SHRI RANDHIR SINGH :** Sir, he has stolen my question.

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** The present policy approach of the Government is the same as suggested by the hon. Member. As far as a Commission on Agriculture is concerned, Government is actively considering the proposal whether we should have an Agricultural Commission on the same lines as the one in 1929.

**MR. SPEAKER :** We have already spent 15 minutes on this question and there are at least 20 more members who want to ask questions. I would like to have the sense of the House. If the Members so desire, I can continue with it for the whole question hour. But the food debate is going to come up soon. Also, there are a few more questions on food today itself. So, shall I pass on to the next question?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS :** No, no.

**MR. SPEAKER :** If that is the sense of the House, I will continue with it for another 5 minutes and then pass on to the next question.

**SHRI S. KANDAPPAN :** As a humble farmer of this country I feel a sense of shame that we are still depending upon foreign countries for our foodgrains and the main responsibility for this lies squarely on the Government, that too the Central Government. According to the statement which they have laid on the Table, remarkable performance has been shown by the Government of Madras both with regard to area as well as yield under the high-yielding variety programme. They have made a demand of Rs. 25 crores for minor irrigation for this year alone and the hon. Minister, while replying has stated that all the demands of the States for minor irrigation will be met and that only 25 per cent of the whole allotment will have to be met by the State. Taking into consideration the performance of Madras, may I know whether this whole amount of Rs. 25 crores is going to be met by the Central Government this year?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** I share the sentiments of the hon. Member that our country should dispense with food imports as early as possible. But he made a remark that the Centre is responsible for the unsatisfactory development of agriculture. May I point out to him that agriculture is entirely a State subject? So, unless the States also exert their utmost to make this agricultural programme successful, it will not be possible to increase agricultural production.

**SHRI S. KANDAPPAN :** The Nasik press comes under the Centre; that is the difficulty of the State Governments.

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** In regard to assistance from the Centre to the States, as far as minor irrigation programme is concerned, out of the Plan ceiling 60 per cent is loan, 15 per cent is grant and 25 per cent is provided by the State Governments; not Rs. 25 crores but 25 per cent.

**SHRI S. KANDAPPAN :** In the budget there was a provision of Rs. 25 crores over and above the Plan allocation and we were made to understand that this is going to be utilized for irrigation purposes. Let the Minister at least state as to how much we will be getting for minor irrigation.

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** For figures regarding individual States I would require notice.

**श्री क० ना० तिवारी :** अधिक उपज देने वाले बीजों के लिये पानी और मिट्टी की जांच बहुत जरूरी होती है क्योंकि सिंथेटिक खाद जो दी जाती है उस में अधिक पानी की जरूरत होती है। आज जो बड़े-बड़े डैम्स की स्कीम सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट के अन्दर है कम से कम उन के लिये हर प्रांविंस में रूपयों की बड़ी कमी है। उन स्कीम्स के बारे में जिन से अन्न का उत्पादन बहुत ज्यादा बढ़ाया जा सकता है या आपने कोई वार्ता या कोई रिपोर्टिंग इरिगेशन

मिनिस्ट्री से की है या आपकी वार्ता हुई है और अगर हुई है तो उसका क्या नतीजा निकला है ?

आप गेहूं, मक्के और चावल आदि के बीज नए निकाल रहे हैं, नई वेराइटीज निकाल रहे हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो दूसरे अन्न देश में पैदा होते हैं उनके सम्बन्ध में भी क्या आपका विभाग कोई जांच कर रहा है और उनके बीजों के लिए भी क्या कोई खोज हो रही है ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** As far as the first part of the hon. Member's question is concerned, the hon. Member should address the question to the Irrigation and Power Ministry. As far as the second part is concerned, I must put it on record that our scientists are achieving great successes in the field of research. We have succeeded in evolving very important strains of maize, paddy, bajra, wheat etc. in our own country. But, at the same time, we are having proper co-ordination with similar scientific organisations in the world. There is no lack of co-ordination between our scientists and scientific activities in other parts of the world.

**श्री शिकरे :** समाधान की बात है कि खाद्यान्नों में आत्मनिर्भरता प्राप्त करने के लिए देश में नई जमीन खेती के लिए तैयार की जाती है, इम्प्रूव्ड मीड्युम का तथा फर्टिलाइजर्स का उत्पादन बढ़ाने के लिए प्रयोग करने का प्रयत्न हो रहा है। लेकिन हमारे यहां गोआ में हम तो देखते हैं कि जो जमीन वहां खेती लायक है और जिस का उत्पादन निःसर्ग की कृपा से हमेशा अच्छा रहता है, सदोप नियोजन की वजह से उसका विध्वंस हो रहा है। गोआ की बहुत सी जमीन नदियों के किनारे है। हाई टाइड के समय में भी वह समुद्र के लेवल से नीचे रहती है। उस जमीन के संरक्षण के लिए मिट्टी के बंधारे हैं। लेकिन

उन नदियों में से मैगेनीज़ और और आयरन और का ट्रांसपोर्ट करने वाले बार्जिस, उन बंधारों का विध्वंस करते हैं और खेतों में पानी भर जाता है। इस विध्वंस को स्टाप करने के लिए क्या कोई कदम सरकार की तरफ से उठाये जायेंगे ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** The Centre is very liberally helping Goa. But may I say that large tracts of land are lying fallow in Goa and if the hon. Member uses his influence those tracts can be cultivated ?

**SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV :** The hon. Minister has stated that the Central Government is doing something to increase inputs etc. to achieve food self-sufficiency, but other defects are also there; for example, the lack of proper co-operation between the Central Government and the State Governments and the lack of co-operation and co-ordination between different departments of the Government, such as, electricity, irrigation, food and agricultural departments. May I know whether the Government has taken any steps to remove these difficulties so that the State Governments and the Central Government may co-operate in achieving food self-sufficiency by 1975 ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** There can be always scope for improvement but may I say that as far as the implementation of the high yielding varieties programme is concerned, the States and the Centre are having complete co-ordination in their programmes and we are proceeding as per the targets fixed. We have almost achieved the targets which were fixed a year earlier and there is very encouraging response both from the farmers and from the State Governments.

**SHRI RANGA :** In his question he asked for co-ordination between the irrigation department, the electricity department and the agriculture

department at the State level. There is no answer to that.

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** I have already said that there can be scope for improvement in the State co-ordination arrangements but the Central teams that visit the States include representatives of all the departments concerned which were mentioned by the hon. Member. Proper co-ordination is brought about by raising the specific issue and by trying to solve the issues.

**SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV :** These targets were fixed previously also but they were not achieved because of the lack of proper co-ordination between the different departments. I wanted to know whether the State Governments are coming forward and have also fixed the targets. Has the Central Government got any information whether they have overcome these difficulties or not ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** I have already submitted that targets have been achieved as far as rural electrification and high yielding varieties programme are concerned and that is why there is such a good atmosphere for agricultural production in the country.

**श्री शिव चन्द्र झा :** एग्रिकलचरल साइंटिस्ट की जो रिपोर्टमेंशन है क्या उन रिपोर्टमेंशन में एक रिपोर्टमेंशन यह भी है कि लैंड ओनरशिप रिलेशन को बदला जाए या यह रिपोर्टमेंशन उन्होंने नहीं की है। अभी हमारे देश में बहुत से लोग बेज़मीन वाले हैं, लैंडलैस हैं। जब तक उनको जमीन नहीं दी जाती है उनको प्रोत्साहन नहीं मिल सकता है उत्पादन बढ़ाने के लिए। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि एग्रिकलचरल साइंटिस्ट्स ने लैंडलैस जो लोग हैं उनको जमीन देने के बारे में भी कोई रिपोर्टमेंशन की है या नहीं की है। यदि की है तो वह क्या है ? यदि नहीं की है तो सरकार लैंडलैस को लैंड देने की कोई योजना बना रही

है ताकि हमारे देश का उत्पादन बढ़ सके और हमारा देश 1971 तक खाद्यान्नों के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर बन सके ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** We have drawn the attention of the State Government to implement the land reforms legislations in their States so that whatever surplus land is available should be distributed on priority to landless labourers.

**SHRI INDER J. MALHOTRA :** In view of the past experience of creating so much confusion before the farmer, may I know whether in future, for better and proper implementation of the agricultural programmes, the Ministry is considering a proposal to abolish the Community Development Department ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** That is beyond my purview. It is mainly a State subject and, I think, the States and the Centre can discuss it.

**SHRI HEM BARUA :** Apart from the country being self-sufficient in foodgrains by 1971, as the President announced to the joint session of Parliament last year, may I know if Government are aware of the fact that different Departments of the Government of India have given different estimates about the present bumper crop? For instance, the Food Department of the Government of India says it will be 92 million tonnes; the Agriculture Department says it will be 95 million tonnes and the Planning Commission says it will be 100 million tonnes. There is a wide disparity even in the estimate in relation to the present bumper crop on which the Government is banking so much. In that context, may I know, when the Government says that we are going to be self-sufficient by 1971 in foodgrains and we are going to have a surplus in foodgrains by 1975, whether Government base their hopes on slippery estimates like this or do they have any other firm estimate ?

Do they have any astrologer to tell them about the food prospects and all that ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** The hon. Member is perhaps referring to the various estimates published from time to time in various places from the various State Governments. May I submit for the information of the House that these are always advance estimates and that the final production statistics are altogether different? Advance estimates are always based first when the sowing takes place on the basis of acreage and some calculations are made on acre yield. Then, after two months, taking into consideration the condition of the crops, some estimates are made. In regard to estimates, sometimes some variation does occur at the State level and the Centre. But the general picture which has been given out in the country that this year we have a bumper crop and good prospects of foodgrains production is really correct. There is nothing wrong in the general estimate that has been worked out.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Bedabrata Barua.

**SHRI HEM BARUA :** He says there is always disparity in the estimates between the Centre and the States. I say there is a disparity in the estimates so far as the Departments of the Central Government are concerned. There is a difference in the estimate prepared by his Food Department and the Agriculture Department, as I have pointed out.

**SHRI BEDABRATA BARUA :** There are certain hazards in what has come to be called exploitive agriculture which we are supposed to enter into in 1967. But exploitive agriculture or intensive cultivation scientifically done may lead to crop diseases. Even high-yielding varieties in the traditional varieties, may lead to some crop diseases that may wipe out the entire crop in the area. Does not the Government consider, in view of the very low importance that is now being given, only 10 per cent of the budget

is being spent on agricultural science, to take steps, because we are going in for intensive cultivation from this year, to give more importance to agricultural science in the years to come ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** We have reorganized the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Formerly, it was under the direct control of the Ministry, but now we have made it an autonomous body. More autonomy is being given to scientists and co-ordinated research programmes are planned. Formerly isolated activities were going on in some States and at the Centre. Now research activities are co-ordinated and at the same time efforts are being made to see that inputs are made available to the farmers in adequate quantities.

**SHRI R. K. BIRLA :** At present groundnut is crushed to extract oil and then it is used either as cattle feed or as manure. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware that a process has been evolved in America whereby the oil could be extracted from the groundnut while the groundnut seed could maintain its own shape and that could be used as a food, mixing with jowar or bajra or wheat, whatever it may be ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** I seek your protection, Sir.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Mr. Onkar Lal Berwa.

**श्री ओंकार लाल बेरवा :** राजस्थान का आधे से ज्यादा एरिया रेगिस्तान है। हमारे विशेषज्ञों ने इसराइल की मदद से उस को हरा-भरा बनाने के लिए उस के साथ एक समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किये थे। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि उस रेगिस्तान को हरा भरा बनाने में हमारे कृषि-विशेषज्ञ कितने काम-याव हुए हैं और अब तक कितनी जमीन हरी-भरी बना सके हैं।

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** Ganganagar District has now become one of the important leading districts from the point of view of agricultural production in our country. When these areas come under the Rajasthan Canal, perhaps some of the problems of Rajasthan would be solved. (*Interruptions*).

**SHRI BAL RAJ MADHOK :** There was an agreement entered into between the Minister of Agriculture of Rajasthan and the Israel Government about arid land cultivation. What has happened to that agreement ?

**SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :** I require notice for this.

IMPORT OF EQUIPMENT FOR CROSS-BAR TELEPHONE EXCHANGE IN DELHI

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\*750. **SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA :**  
**SHRI N. S. SHARMA :**  
**SHRI R. S. VIDYARTHI :**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the equipment for the new Cross-bar type Telephone Exchange commissioned in Delhi has been imported from Belgium;

(b) if so, the cost thereof;

(c) the details of agreement entered into with the Belgium Firm in this regard; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that this equipment is costlier as compared to the old equipment, and if so, the comparative cost of the old and new equipment ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) :** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The f.o.b. cost of the equipment was approximately 41,586,384 Belgium Francs = Rs. 39,60,608/- (pre-devaluation).