

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).

(c) The order was for supply of 7,000 lines automatic telephone exchange of Cross-bar type for installation at Karolbagh as per specification supplied by P&T. The installation was to be carried out by P&T staff.

(d) No, Sir.

श्री कंबर लाल गुप्त : अध्यक्ष महोदय, स्प्लीमेंटरी पूछने से पहले मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि मेरे सवाल का पार्ट (डी) इस प्रकार था :

"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."

मिनिस्टर माहब ने उत्तर में केवल "नो" कहा है। उन को कम्पैरेटिव कास्ट तो बतानी चाहिए।

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : So far as the comparative cost is concerned, in the old type we were spending about Rs. 1150 per line and with the new imported one which we have installed in Karol Bagh, the cost comes to approximately Rs. 1100 per line.

श्री कंबर लाल गुप्त : अभी मंत्री महोदय ने बताया है कि इस क्रॉसबार टाइप के एक्सचेंज के इन्स्टालेशन में कई गुना ज्यादा खर्च आता है।

श्री इ० कु० गुजराल : मैंने कहा है कि वह चीपर है, उस की कास्ट पचास रुपये कम है।

श्री कंबर लाल गुप्त : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि पहले एक्विपमेंट को बदलने से क्या क्या लाभ हुआ है।

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : I would like to clarify two things. One is that we are not changing the equipment. The programme is for additional construction programme of new exchanges in India. Naturally, with our growth, we are taking to newer and latest technology, and the latest technology is

crossbar, because it has lesser moving parts, lesser maintenance cost, it is more computerised it is better to maintain and easier to run.

श्री कंबर लाल गुप्त : मेरी सूचना यह है कि कैरोल बाग एक्सचेंज के अलावा मद्रास और दूसरी जगहों पर भी ऐसे एक्सचेंज लगाए गए हैं। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि ये जितने भी क्रॉसबार एक्सचेंज लगाए गए हैं, इन में फारेन एक्सचेंज कितना लगा है। क्या यह भी ठीक है कि पहले जो एक्सचेंज काम करता था, उस में कोई फारेन एक्सचेंज नहीं लगता था, या बहुत थोड़ा लगता था? क्या सरकार फारेन एक्सचेंज की स्थिति को देखने हुए इस प्रकार की कोई योजना बनायेगी, जिससे हमारे देश में पैदा होने वाली चीजों को ही इस्तेमाल किया जाये?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : When we entered into a programme of foreign collaboration in regard to this cross-bar, the foreign collaboration had two parts in it. One was that we were to import 48,000 lines for six exchanges, but it also included collaboration for manufacturing here. We have already started manufacturing cross-bar in India and we shall be completing 100,000 lines in all by about the end of next year. Even now, as we are installing the imported one in Delhi, we have already started installing in Ernakulam and Shillong the Indian-made cross-bar.

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA : What was the foreign exchange involved in these three exchanges? That was my question. I was not asking about the future.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : When we called for tenders for the supply of 48,000 lines for internal exchanges and 6500 lines for trunk exchanges, the total tender at that time was in the proximity of Rs. 464 lakhs including collaboration agreement for manufacturing in India.

श्री रा० स्व० बिद्यार्थी : क्या यह सत्य नहीं है कि बेलजियम के यंत्र दूसरे देशों में विफल साबित हुए हैं और उनके मुकाबले में स्विटजरलैण्ड, जर्मनी और नार्वे के यंत्र ज्यादा कामयाब हुए हैं ? क्या यह भी सत्य नहीं है कि साफ्ट करेन्सी में इस से अच्छे यंत्र मिल सकते थे और विशेषज्ञ भी यह चाहते थे कि वहाँ से लिये जायें, लेकिन मंत्रालय ने कुछ कनसिडरेशन्ज़ को सामने रख कर उस को नहीं माना ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Firstly when this agreement was entered into in 1964, we had called for global tenders and three tenders were considered, from Japan, Sweden and from Belgium. While the Japanese tender was the cheapest, the Swedish one was higher than the Belgium one. But the main considerations were those of technology. After considering the technology and weighing all the aspects, it was felt at that time by the technical experts that we should go in for the Belgium cross-bar. So far as its failure or success elsewhere is concerned, I would not dare to make a statement on that, but I would only say this that our experiment and experience here has been good.

श्री रा० स्व० बिद्यार्थी : मेरे दूसरे प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं दिया गया है। क्या यह हकीकत नहीं है कि साफ्ट करेन्सी में इस से अच्छे यंत्र मिल सकते थे और विशेषज्ञ भी यह कहते थे कि वे अच्छे रहेंगे, लेकिन मंत्रालय ने उन को लेने का प्रयास नहीं किया ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : I do not know what his conception of soft currency is. But so far as I know, the Belgium currency is soft currency for us.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : The cross-bar scheme, the coaxial scheme and the micro-wave scheme are all sophistications needed by high business circles and by people who want facilities like direct telephones and they

are not of importance to the masses. When we are losing very heavily on telephones while on postage actually there is a profit of Rs. 8 crores on 15 paise stamps, from the point of view of the common man, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Government could not postpone this sophistication till such time as there was more money in telephones and people were ready to pay these higher postages which are a cruel imposition.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : The hon. member is a learned person. He is wrong in assuming that we are losing on telephones. We are not; we are making money on telephones.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : Then why not reduce the rates ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : So far as high sophistication is concerned, we are not taking to higher forms of sophistication and technology for the fun of it. We do so because we want to give better, enhanced and extended service to the consumer.

श्री अ० सि० सहगल : अभी आप ने बताया कि हम ने तीन देशों में टेंडर मागे थे। इन तीन देशों में सबसे लोएस्ट किम का था ?

श्री इ० कु० गुजराल : जापान का, मैंने अर्ज किया।

श्री अ० सि० सहगल : और क्या कारण था कि जो लोएस्ट टेंडर था उस को न दे कर के दूसरे को दिया ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : This was 4 years ago and it was discussed here at length at that time. The point is, there were three tenders and naturally those who evaluate the tenders, evaluate the price and the technological facilities and in balance come to a decision.

SHRI KIRUTTINAN : I want to know from the minister the names of the cities in India where the cross bar system has been introduced so far and

the names of other countries other than Belgium with whom India has entered into an agreement to import the cross-bar equipment. As far as I know, the cross-bar system has been introduced in Dlehi and in Madras. It is very easy therefore to introduce direct dialling between Madras and Delhi. May I know why there is delay in doing this and when it will be done ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : So far as direct trunk dialling is concerned, by the end of this year, we will be able to connect 17 cities including Madras under direct trunk dialling. About the other question, we have already introduced the cross-bar system in Madras, Bombay and Delhi. We are now installing more cross-bar exchanges in Delhi, Bombay, Ernakulam and Shillong.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : The minister said that the imported cross-bar equipment costs about Rs. 4.64 crores. May I know whether one of this imported equipment, which was meant for Delhi, was seized by Pakistan during 1965 and it is now installed at Islamabad ? May I know what steps Government are taking to get it back ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : The reply to the first question whether Pakistan seized it, is 'yes'. About the steps we are taking to get it back, it is part of a bigger policy.

SUBSIDY ON FOODGRAINS

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*753. **SHRI PREM CHAND VERMA :**
SHRI S. C. SAMANTA :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether subsidy on foodgrains has been abolished throughout the country and if so, since when;

(b) if not, which of the States are still receiving subsidy on foodgrains and the extent of subsidy to each State; and

(c) the total annual subsidy being paid by Government at present ?

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THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) With the revision in the issue prices of foodgrains supplied from Central stocks w.e.f. 1st January 1968, the subsidy has been abolished in case of imported wheat and indigenous coarse rice only, while in the case of imported milo and imported rice, it has been reduced to some extent.

(b) The element of subsidy is built-in into the issue prices of the foodgrains and no subsidy as such is separately paid to any State Government. However, with the issue prices being uniform for all the States, the element of subsidy in the issue prices is also uniform for all the States.

(c) The estimated annual subsidy in the sale of foodgrains from Central stocks during the financial year 1967-68 is about Rs. 106 crores.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा : मैं मन्त्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि 1966-67 में कुल कितनी रकम खाद्यान्न की सहायता के रूप में विभिन्न राज्यों को दी गई है और उस रकम में से काश्मीर गवर्नमेंट को कितनी रकम दी गई है यह मैं स्पेसिफिक तौर पर पूछना चाहूंगा ।

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I have already said that we do not give any amount to the State Governments. As I said, the issue prices are uniform throughout the country, including the Jammu and Kashmir State. At whatever price we issue to other States, at the same price we issue to Jammu and Kashmir also.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा : अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह क्वेश्चन एक दो बार पहले भी आया लेकिन उसे माननीय मंत्री महोदय टाल देते हैं । मेरा सीधा क्वेश्चन एक यह है कि काश्मीर में चावल का भाव जो है वह हिन्दुस्तान के दूसरे सूबों से 50 प्रतिशत कम है और वह इसलिए वहाँ पर कम किया जाता है कि उसकी