

for that particular area from Government of India has already been provided by our department.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, our districts have really been benefited by the assistance provided by Central Government and there is no more scarcity of medicines there. I would like to know the achievements of the combined efforts of UNICEF and Technology Mission regarding the immunization programme. I would also like to know about the incentives being given for further improvement.

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: I don't think that the hon. Member is totally ignorant about the progress. Almost all the Schemes of UNICEF and of the concerned Ministry are being implemented in your state. The Government will try to provide maximum assistance something more is needed and the attention of the Government is invited to it.

12.00 hrs.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

[English]

Restructuring of telecommunication cadres

S.N.Q. 2. SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether sometime before Government had given an assurance that action on the various issues regarding restructuring of Telecommunications cadres would be expedited;

(b) if so, the progress made so far?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is given below.

STATEMENT

The Committee on pay scales of technical and allied cadres under the Chairman-

ship of Shri S.M. Agarwal, former Secretary (Communications) submitted its report on 21.12.87. This report was discussed with all the three staff Federations of Department of Telecommunications.

After thorough examination of the report taking into consideration the various demands of the three Federations, a final proposal for cadre restructuring was drawn up by the Department of Telecom. and sent to Finance Ministry and copy to Department of Personnel and Training and Cabinet Secretary for approval.

Hon'ble Minister of Finance has been requested by Minister (E&C) to convene a meeting of group of three Ministers consisting of Finance Minister, Minister (Energy & Communications) and Minister of State for Personnel and Training to finalize the cadre restructuring soon.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER: There is an impression in the country that the Government will act only when there is an agitation. During the last Budget Session, there was a strike by a particular cadre of the Tele-Communication Department. Then the Government appointed the Agarwal Committee and an assurance was given on the floor of the House that the Committee's Report will be issued within a month's time and it will be implemented soon. It is nearly five months since the Report came but till todate, the Report has not been implemented.

May I know from the hon. Minister--when the union leaders met him, he disarmed them by his talks and after talking with him, they returned thinking that it will be implemented--whether there was any understanding between the union leaders and particularly with one or two unions of the Department, with regard to the re-structuring of the Tele-Communication cadre there? If so, what are the main points of the understanding? Will you kindly enlighten us?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: The fact is that there are three federations. As soon as I took over the charge, there was already a protest and strike by one of the unions.

The first thing which I did was, I called them. I said, there was no need to precipitate any matter, when we can, by dialogue, sort out the problems. I had talked not only with them but I had talked with the leaders of all the three federations. Shri S.M. Agarwal's Committee Report was already there. That was being examined. Although, we were agreeing to accept some of the recommendations, the federations were not willing to accept that. Therefore, if a Report is not agreeable to the Trade Unions, the only way is, again to have a discussion and dialogue...

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Have it.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: We had it. Ultimately, with all the three federations we came to some understanding. That understanding has to be accepted. It has financial implications. It has implications from personnel point of view. So, I took up the matter immediately after arriving at an agreement with these federations with the Finance Ministry and the Ministry of Personnel. We are going to sit together. This I did in the month of April—about 15th of April. We are going to sit together to come to an understanding of how things can be sorted out. I am sure we can find a way. But I would only request that when there is a keenness on both sides and particularly on the side of the Government to sort out the problem, the attitude of precipitating a crisis which creates a vicious circle of ill-will should be avoided. This is my plea with all our trade union friends and those who want the welfare of the workers.

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER: Sir, at the meeting held on 7.3.88 between the representatives of the Department and one particular labour union, it was definitely understood on behalf of the management that they are making all sincere efforts and hope to get Government's concurrence with regard to their pay scales, etc. for technicians and technical supervisors in six weeks' time, as per the Minister's assurance. So, already eight weeks have passed. In March, when they struck work, this was the assurance given by the hon. Minister; but now, as you say, till today it has not been finalized. The Department has given the assur-

ance. so, so far as these are concerned, I am told that all the unions are one with this particular recommendation with regard to the restructuring of the cadre. In view of this, will you see that it is implemented soon? And you should tell all the unions that within a particular period—you may take a week or fortnight—it will be implemented, because they have also given another strike notice, i.e. of going on strike again. It should be avoided, because you know the inconvenience caused to the public. We, the Members of Parliament particularly, have bitter experience. Eight or nine weeks are over. So, you should kindly see that it is implemented within 15 days. Will the hon. Minister stick to this assurance given to the employees?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: It is true that I had told the unions that we would try to come to a final decision within six weeks. I myself, as I said, immediately sent a proposal to the Financial Minister after our meeting, on 5th April 1988, and I am pursuing the matter. But after all, we must appreciate that they also have other pressures on them. I cannot understand this attitude. You cannot sit on somebody's neck and try to say that this has a priority, and you must leave everything else, Parliament Session, the Budget Session, all these things are going on. I could not pressurize the Finance Minister to leave everything else: Finance Bill and everything and attend to this problem. You must appreciate this. Not only this: after that, I have sent a reminder also on 15th. I am at it. My anguish is this: you hold me to ransom, as it were: Six weeks are over, and again *dharna* has been started by one of the unions. In our department, that particular union, viz. of the technicians started *dharna* from 2nd May. If there is attitude, how can work go on? You must have an attitude of some faith, some confidence. If I say that I am sorry I have failed, then you are free to do what you like. But till I am trying to resolve the problem, there must be an atmosphere of goodwill, from both the sides. I would plead with our colleague Mr Krishna Iyer, and all our trade union leaders to prevail on the people in Telecom not to precipitate such matters