

[9 May, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The decisions taken during the meeting held on 5th September 1998 were conveyed by the Member Convener, National Task Force on Information Technology and Software vide his letter dated 23rd September 1998. The minutes of the IT Task Force meeting held on 21st November 1998 confirms the decisions taken during the meeting held on 5th September 1998. The minutes also annex a copy of the MOU signed between DOT and IUNet/CMU.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The terms of reference of the IT Task Force inter-alia authorised them to "...determine the means for creating a National Informatics Infrastructure (NII) backbone, bridging it to the Local Informatics Infrastructure (LTI) and the Global Informatics Infrastructure (GII)..."

Review of Sankhya Vahini Project

4623. SHRI K.M KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications has not agreed to the proposal of Government regarding 'Sankhya Vahini' high-speed data network;

(b) if so, whether Government are rethinking to review its move and try to find out the similar technologies available for similar purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The Standing Committee of Parliament while examining the Demand for grants for the DOT/DTS, for the year 2000-2001 has recommended that the matter should be looked into in-depth and reviewed before the Joint Venture Agreement is finally entered into.

(b) to (d) As reported by the then Chairman of National Task Force on Information Technology and Software Development, the Sankhya Vahini Project was conceived after broad based consultation

and discussions with officials, academicians, scientists, technologists and wider cross sections of administrators in the Government. Department of Telecom (now Department of Telecom Services) was made a nodal agency to establish High Speed Data Network in India in conjunction with IUNet of Carnegie Mellon University, USA. Thereafter, normal procedures as prescribed for approval of such projects were followed. There is no proposal at present to review the project.

Objectives and functions of IGNCA

4624. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government contemplate to redefine the objectives and functions of the Centre to render its presence more relevant, broad based and effective in the light of the reconstitution of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA) Trust;

(b) if so, whether any guidelines have been drawn up for the purpose; and

(c) if not, whether Government have been fully convinced that the present objectives and functions of the Centre are relevant and comprehensive and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) By reconstituting the IGNCA Trust, the Government have ensured that the Trust functions in accordance with the original Trust Deed of March 1987. It can be expected that the Trust will review the activities and functions of IGNCA and issue appropriate directives on ongoing and future programmes and activities.

Protection to Konark from Salinity

4625. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Status are breaking down in Konark because of salinity;

(b) whether it is also a fact that monuments are endangered by further salinity as the huge trees which protected the monuments were destroyed by the super cyclone;