

cons. (*Interruptions*). It is not only the Calcutta Telephone Advisory Committee which has recommended it but some others also. We are looking into it.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Calcutta Telephones Advisory Committee has...

MR. CHAIRMAN: They have accepted it.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Have they accepted it?

SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL: We will look into it.

SHRI SHYAM SUNDAR MOHAPATRA: Sir, in the course of last one month my telephone has remained dead 43 times and I have kept a record of it in my diary. Today also for the last five hours my telephone is dead and there is no response. I want to know from the hon. Minister how many times his telephone was dead after he took over as Minister. Secondly, as in other States the telephone authorities check up every morning VIP telephones and find out whether they are working all right, whether they are going to introduce a system whereby the telephones of Members of Parliament will be checked up every morning?

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: Mr. A. P. Sharma had started it.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL: As far as the first part is concerned, not once. As far as the second part is concerned, such a system has already been introduced. Some M.Ps. have personally contacted me and appreciated that Members of Parliament are being rung up and enquiries are being made from them whether their telephones are working or not.

Indo-Argentina discussions on Oil and Natural Gas

*204. SHRI ADINARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indo-Argentina discussions on oil and natural gas were held in New Delhi in the 1st week of February, 1983; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

DEPARTMENT OF PETROLEUM IN DEPARTMENT OF PETROLEUM IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI GARGI SHANKAR MISHRA): (a) A trade delegation of Argentina businessmen and experts visited India from February 7 to 19, 1983 to explore possibilities of co-operation in industry, trade and technology between India and Argentina.

(b) Discussions were held with ONGC at the request of the Argentina delegation to explore the possibilities in the field of oil exploration/production. The Argentina delegation showed interest in construction of ships, platforms, jack-up rigs and laying of onshore pipelines etc.

SHRI ADINARAYANA REDDY: Is there any possibility of concluding any agreement or treaty on this issue?

SHRI GARGI SHANKAR MISHRA: We have only placed some order, some trial order, for certain equipment, but so far we have not received anything.

Appointment of Chairman of the Central Electricity Authority

*205. SHRI SUSHIL CHAND MOHUNTA:†

SHRI LADLI MOHAN NIGAM:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Electricity Supply Act (ESA) restricts the selection for the post of Chairman, Central Electricity Authority (CEA) only to the full time Members of CEA (5 Engg. and 1 Commercial);

(b) whether it is also a fact that the present re-employed Chairman, CEA, and his predecessors have never worked as full time Members in CEA prior to such appointments; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to revise, its policy in this regard so that a part time member could be appointed as Chairman of the Authority?

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sushil Chand Mohunta.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) Section 3(3) of the Electricity Supply Act, 1948 provides that Central Government shall appoint one of the full time Members to be the Chairman of the Central Electricity Authority.

(b) The present Chairman, Central Electricity Authority was appointed as full time Member and Chairman, CEA with effect from 21st November, 1977. Invariably the same practice was followed previously.

(c) There is no proposal under consideration to amend the Electricity Supply Act, 1948 to provide for appointment of a part-time member as Chairman but between 1949 to 1976, having regard to the Law then prevailing, a Part-time member could be appointed as the Chairman of the Central Electricity Authority.

Re-Employment of superannuated officers in the Central Electricity Authority

*209. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR:†

SHRI LADLI MOHAN NIGAM:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that superannuated officers have been/are still being re-employed at the top posts of the Central Electricity Authority in disregard to the clear directives of the Prime Minister; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor particularly when Central Electricity Authority and 20 State Electricity Boards have enough suitable officers for manning such posts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) Chairman and Member (Operations), Central Electricity Authority have been re-employed after their superannuation but before the directives of the Prime Minister. Their re-employment is under review having regard to the above directives.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Bhai Mahavir.

(b) The officers were then re-employed taking into account their experience, expertise and the requirements of the post. It was felt that suitable officers possessing requisite experience were not available.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, Question No. 209 is closely related, it may be combined with Q. No. 205. It is more or less the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you had just told me earlier, it would have been much better.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: The request is usually made when the first question is taken up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right; it will be combined.

SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL: Since when, Sir, the new leader has taken the chair? Mr. Kulkarni is sitting there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kulkarni can take any chair which is vacant.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: How are you concerned?

SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL: I am very much concerned, because then my Government will be there.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: He is warming up the seat for you.

SHRI SUSHIL CHAND MOHUNTA: Sir, my question is, the appointment, as is provided in the Section, is to be made of a full-time person. The practice, as a matter of fact, is that the Department is bypassing the provisions of the Section and at the time the Chairman is appointed, a person is appointed as full-time and at the same time he is appointed as Chairman of the Board. I am interested to know why are those members who are already working as full-time members, bypassed and another person from outside is brought in, or a person under re-employment is brought in and appointed as Chairman? As a result of this lapse, because interested people are put as Chairman who are not technical hand, there are instances where our Indian experts have been by-