

(c) It is not feasible to lay down any time limit for provision of these facilities in all the unauthorised colonies.

Redesigning of Cross Bar Telephones Switching Equipment

1304. SHRI JAGANNATH RAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report in the Times of India dated September 22, 1980 to the effect that the Indian Telephone Industries and the Telecommunications Research Centre have completely redesigned the crossbar telephones switching equipment for the manufacture of which foreign offers from Sweden etc. have also been received;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and whether the idea of foreign collaboration has been given up; and

(c) the estimated extent of saving in terms of foreign exchange by adoption of the indigenous system developed by the ITI and TRC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KARTIK ORAON): (a) and (b) The attention of the Government has been drawn to the report in the Times of India dated September 22, 1980. The Indian Crossbar Project Group, consisting of representatives from Indian Telephone Industries and Telecommunications Research Centre of P&T Department was set up for the development of an indigenous crossbar telephone system by extensive redesigning of the imported Pentaconta system, to make it suitable for Indian conditions. Messrs. L. M. Ericsson of Sweden and two Japanese firms submitted tenders and Messrs. Indian Telephone Industries Ltd. of Bangalore submitted a proposal for setting up the proposed crossbar switching equipment factory at Rae Bareilly. The Government have, after careful consideration of the

foreign tenders and the proposal of ITI Ltd., decided in favour of adopting the Indian Crossbar Project system offered by Indian Telephone Industries Ltd. for manufacture at Rae Bareilly factory. For this purpose, ITI Ltd. will have a limited collaboration with Messrs. BTM Ltd. of Belgium. But no payment will be made for transfer of knowhow.

(c) The annual saving in foreign exchange by adopting the indigenously developed Indian Crossbar Project System is estimated to range from Rs. 5.6 crores to Rs. 7.3 crores per year after reaching full production.

Creation of a separate postal circle for Assam

1305. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since taken any decision on the creation of a separate Postal Circle for Assam; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KARTIK ORAON): (a) and (b) The matter is still under consideration.

Working conditions of workers of R.M.S.

1306. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to Government's notice that for want of space, sorting and distribution, letters and articles get delayed in R.M.S.;

(b) what is the average strength of staff of the R.M.S. in each train;

(c) what is the total space provided in each train for that staff;

(d) whether Government propose to improve the working conditions of the R.M.S. workers; and