

organisation of agricultural extension etc. has been taken up under World Bank Projects in the States of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam.

Indians sent to USA as visiting professors

143. SHRI SUJAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the American Studies Research Centre, Hyderabad has sought Central Government's permission for sending Indians as visiting professors to the USA; and

(b) if so, what is the number of such cases where approval was sought and what is the number of cases where permission was granted?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Sports policy

144. SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH: SHRI PRAKASH MEHROTRA:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to formulate a sports policy in the near future; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b) The Government had asked the All India Council of Sports in 1978 to formulate a draft National Sports Policy. It is understood that the Council is consulting the various sports interests to finalise its approach. The Government will consider the matter after the proposals of the AICS are received.

Supply of crude oil

145. SHRI ROSHAN LAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the position regarding supply of crude oil is not likely to ease in the near future;

(b) whether it is also a fact that new experiments are being made to use power alcohol as a substitute for petrol; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): (a) During the past few years we have been meeting crude oil requirements by importing 15 to 17 million tonnes of crude oil every year. No difficulties are envisaged in the import of our full anticipated requirements of our imported crude during the year 1960-31. Efforts are at an advanced stage to tie up all requirements.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Deterioration of telephone services in Delhi and Calcutta

146. SHRI ROSHAN LAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that telephone service in Delhi has further deteriorated during the last two years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in cities like Calcutta telephone service has almost collapsed; and

(c) if so, what remedial steps Government are taking to improve the present situation in these cities?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI C. M. STEPHEN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. There is, however, some deterioration in telephone service in Calcutta city primarily

ly due to damage and thefts in the underground cable network. A number of remedial actions are being taken to stop this deterioration and improve the service. To overcome faults in underground cables and to improve the general functioning, a number of short and long term measures are being implemented progressively in both cities. They are—

(i) Improved construction practices and acceptance testing of underground cable during the laying.

(ii) Gas Pressurisation of junction and primary cables as a preventive maintenance technique.

(iii) Use of jelly filled cables in distribution cable network to prevent ingress of moisture.

(iv) Use of cable ducts in selected congested routes so as to protect new cables from damage.

(v) Use of microwave/PCM media for local junctions to improve reliability and availability.

To improve the functioning of the internal exchange plant in Calcutta network, apart from normal preventive and corrective maintenance measures, a concerted action has been taken to replace the most affected worn out parts in stronger automatic exchanges. In Pentaconta crossbar exchanges an upgradation programme has just been completed to improve the working in both cities. Regarding thefts the State Government has been approached to take appropriate action.

Decline in Sugarcane cultivation

147. SHRI PRAKASH MEHROTRA:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN
MISHRA;
SHRI GIAN CHAND TOTU:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the acreage of land under sugarcane cultivation during 1976-77 and 1978-79;

(b) whether there has been a decline in sugarcane cultivation during the last three years; and

(c) what are the reasons for such decline and if so, what steps Government are taking to increase the production of sugarcane?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN):
(a) and (b) The area figures of sugarcane during the three years ending 1978-79 are given below :

Year	Area (Lakh hectares)	Percentage change over the previous year
1976-77	20.7	(+) 3.8
1977-78	31.5	(+) 9.9
1978-79	31.2	(—) 1.0

(c) There was only marginal decline in the area under sugarcane in 1978-79 as compared with the peak level area of 31.5 lakh hectareg in 1977-78. Production of sugarcane is proposed to be increased by measures aimed at raising yield per hectare through clean inter-cultivation, use of chemical weedcides, spraying against pests, fertilizer use, demonstrations and 'Training & Visit' system of extension.

Deterioration in telephone services

148. SHRI PRAKASH MEHROTRA:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN
MISHRA;
SHRI GIAN CHAND TOTU:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware that in recent years there is sharp and continuing decline in telephone services throughout the country; and

(b) if so, what remedial measures are being taken to maintain and to increase