

Crash Plan for Telephone Connections

148. SHRI JANARDHANA REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any crash plan for more telephone lines to bridge the gap between demand and supply is under Government's consideration; and

(b) if so, what are the main features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (DR. SHANKER DAYAL SHARMA) : (a) and (b) Efforts are continuously being made to provide more connections. While 86,000 new connections were provided in 1974-75, we have been successful in providing 1,37 lakh connections in 1975-76. In the remaining three years of the Fifth Plan, it is proposed to provide about 6 lakh connections.

Talks with Bangladesh on Farakka waters

149. SHRIMATI SAVITA BEHEN :

SHRI SAT PAUL MITTAL :

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA :

SHRI MAHENDRA BAHADUR SINGH :

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI KUMARI CHUNDAVAT :

SHRI PRAKASH VEER SHASTRI :

DR. RAMKRIPAL SINHA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government recently offered to the Bangladesh Government to have further talks on the Farakka Barrage project and the distribution of Ganga waters between the two countries;

(b) if so, what is Bangladesh Government's response thereto; and

(c) what are the outstanding issues still to be settled between the two countries?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS) : (a) and (b) In response to the proposal of the Government of India, high level technical talks have been held between India and Bangladesh in Dacca from 27 April to 2 May 1976 and Calcutta from 6 to 11 May 1976 regarding the sharing of Ganga waters during the lean season between the two countries.

(c) An important bilateral issue still outstanding relates to the delimitation of the maritime boundary between the two countries.

Withdrawal of Pakistan's complaint from I.C.A.O.

150. SHRIMATI SAVITA BEHEN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Pakistan has agreed to withdraw its complaint from the International Civil Aviation Organisation; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by the two countries for normalisation of relations and resumption of diplomatic ties?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Pakistan's Prime Minister, in a letter to the Prime Minister, has offered to withdraw Pakistan's case from the I.C.A.O.

(b) Talks are currently going on in Islamabad to discuss the resumption of air-links including overflights, rail and road communications as well as measures for resumption of diplomatic relations.

Organising trade unions for agricultural labour

151. SHRI DEORAO PATIL : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to organise trade unions of agricultural labours as part of the 20-Point Economic Programme;