

have the Chandari godown with them now, have reported that there has been no damage to foodgrains, due to rains, at this godown.

(b) Does not arise.]

**CHIEF MINISTERS' CONFERENCE ON
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-
OPERATION**

656. SHRI G. R. PATIL : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was a conference of Chief Ministers and State Ministers for Cooperation and Panchayati Raj, recently at Madras, to discuss community development and cooperation ; and

(b) if so, the decisions arrived at at this conference ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY) : (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) The decisions/recommendations of the Conference are as in the enclosed statements. [See Appendix LXV, An-nexure Nos. 37 and 38.]

APPLICATION FOR D.M.S. TOKEN

657. SHRI B. C. PATTANAYAK :
CHAUDHARY A. MOHAM-
MAD :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of applicants for Delhi Milk Scheme tokens in the VIP list up to the end of March, 1968 ; and

(b) the time by when these applicants will be provided with D.M.S. tokens ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) 812 applications.

(b) With the improvement in the procurement of milk, release of milk tokens to some applicants on the V.I.P. waiting list may be possible during winter season.

ACUTE FOODGRAIN SCARCITY IN ASSAM

658. SARDAR RAM SINGH :

SHRI B. K. MAHANTI :

CHAUDHARY A. MOHAM-
MAD :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated the 8th May, 1968 that according to official sources at least 75,000 people of Kam-rup District (Assam) are suffering from acute foodgrain scarcity conditions;

(b) whether it is a fact that Assam has never been a deficit area and the crop production this year has been quite satisfactory ;

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been no abnormal cut in the Central supply of foodgrains to the State; and

(d) if so, what are the causes of the acute scarcity of foodgrains and what is Government's information regarding deaths resulting from starvation and what measures have been taken to tackle the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) The State has been getting regular allotment of foodgrains from the Centre. Though there was some shortfall in production during the previous two years, production of foodgrains in Assam has been satisfactory during 1967-68.

(c) Yes, Madam.

(d) The State Government have reported that in Kamalpur and Rangia circles of Kamrup district, scarcity conditions prevailed from April-May, 1968 due to consecutive floods during the last 2 years and damage of winter paddy due to drought and pests. Undertaking relief measures in scarcity affected areas is primarily the responsibility of the State Government. The Government of Assam have stated that they are alive to the situation and taking necessary relief measures. They have

also stated that reports of the three starvation deaths in the district have been enquired into and found to be baseless.

**SHORTAGE OF ACCOMMODATION IN
TELEPHONE EXCHANGE AT SANGLI**

659. SHRI G. R. PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is an acute shortage of accommodation in the building rented by the Telephone Exchange at Sangli (Maharashtra State);

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) the time by when the telephone exchange will have its own building at Sangli?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJ-RAL): (a) The accommodation in the rented building for Telephone Exchange, Sangli is just sufficient with little space for expansion.

(b) Plot of land for construction of Exchange building has already been acquired and project sanctioned.

(c) Preliminary Plans and estimates have been approved for construction of the Telephone Exchange building. However, two roads have been proposed through this site in Sangli Development Plan. Efforts are being made with the Municipality/State Government to get these deleted. After approval is received, it will take about two years for the building to be available.

TELEPHONE CONNECTION IN SANGLI

660. SHRI G. R. PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications for getting telephone connections in Sangli city in Maharashtra State, under the priority and exempted categories are under Government's consideration at present:

(b) the reasons for the delay in the disposal of these applications; and

(c) the time by when the demand of the applicants will be met?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJ-RAL) : (a) 47—up to 15th of July, 1968 (Priority/Exempted category is now named 'Special' category).

(b) and (c) There has been some delay due to reshuffling of waiting lists in different categories on introduction of O.Y.T. Scheme. Telephone connections to all the above mentioned applicants are, however, expected to be provided shortly.

**TELEPHONE INSTALLATIONS IN THE
COUNTRY**

661. SHRI G. R. PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of telephone installations in the country as on 30th June, 1968;

(b) the programme for expansion of telephone installation during the year 1968-69 and the Fourth Five Year Plan period;

(c) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for giving telephone connections to villages near about Sangli city in Maharashtra State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJ-RAL): (a) The total number of telephones installed as on 31-3-68 was 10.18 lakhs. The corresponding figure for 30th June, 1968 is not available. The number of telephones installed during the period 1st April, 1968 to 30th June, 1968 is estimated at 15,000. These figures comprise of direct exchange lines and their extensions, etc.

(b) In 1968-69 it is planned to provide 1.33 lakhs additional telephones. Programme for the revised fourth Five Year Plan has not been finalised. However it has been tentatively proposed to instal 15 lakhs telephones during the Fourth Five Year Plan period (1969-74) subject to availability of resources.

(c) and (d) The proposals for opening Long-distance Public Call Offices at Kavalapur, Walva, Digras Kasba and Takari in Sangli District have been