

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

National Testing Agency for IITs

*121. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to set up a National Testing Agency as recommended by the Committee on IIT-JEE reforms headed by Damodar Acharya;
- (b) whether the NIIT exam is likely to go online in the coming years;
- (c) whether Government proposes any other national level tests for admission to other higher educational institutions; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Damodar Acharya Committee has, *inter alia*, recommended the setting up of a National Testing Agency to the IIT Council, which in its 41st meeting held on 10.09.2010 referred the interim report to a Committee headed by Dr. Ramasami, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology which is yet to submit its report.

(b) The Joint Admission Board (JAB) which is the body to conduct Indian Institute of Technology - Joint Entrance Examination (IIT-JEE) and includes among others, Directors of all IITs as its member, has informed that although there is a plan for the IIT-JEE to go on line in future, there is no specific time limit set for this purpose.

(c) and (d) A Committee of Vice-Chancellors has recommended Common Entrance Test for admission to Central Universities in a phased manner with a view to avoid multiplicity of entrance tests resulting in wastage of time and resources. Central Universities are autonomous bodies governed by their own Acts and Statutes. A decision on Common Entrance Test has to be taken by the relevant statutory bodies of these Universities.

SHRI N.K. SINGH: Sir, let me ask my first supplementary to the hon. Minister. Sir, the CAT examination went online in 2009. Has the Government conducted any study on whether the online format has brought in uniformity of standards, greater transparency and diversified its intake, particularly, from the rural areas?

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, according to the convener of CAT, 2009, the traditional format of conducting CAT in the 'Pencil and Paper' format was becoming untenable in terms of the increasing numbers, and, therefore, CAT examination went online. We did have teething problems when CAT did go online initially. But the last CAT examination went on very smoothly, and, there were no issues at that point of time. Sir, these exams are conducted online, and, on the issue whether the rural children have been able to take the CAT exam successfully, these exams are not internet-based but rather centers are identified, and, children are notified about the centers where they will need to go and take the examination.

Since, it is not internet-based and children come to the centers and take the exam, in the last CAT exam which was conducted, there were no issues raised, and, so far, no children have come forward and complained to us on their inability to take the examination.

SHRI N.K. SINGH: Sir, my second supplementary is that in March, 2010, there were announcements that students who wish to take the examination would need to have 80 per cent pre-qualifying marks in Class-XII. A committee under Prof. Damodar Acharya was also appointed.

Subsequently, in December 2010, there was another announcement made that for the IITs also, the Government propose to go for online examination. Another Committee under T. Ramaswamy had been appointed. Will the Government come out with a coherent policy to end the uncertainty and to clearly bring out the kind of changes they propose to bring in the examination system for effecting intake for IITs?

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, the students taking examination into engineering, pharmacy, architectural and so on need to have (a) good command over the subject, science subject, for that matter and (b) reasonable levels of analytical skills, intelligence, general awareness and also communication skills. Whereas the Common Entrance Examination usually tests the child only on the command over the subject and does not really test the child on analytical skills is the reason it was believed that we need to have a Common Entrance Examination which would address

both the analytical skills as well as the command of the child over the subject. Damodar Acharya Committee was constituted to look and recommend or suggest ways in which we could come up with a Common Entrance Examination for the IITs. The Interim Report has been submitted. But since there has been no consensus on the Interim Report, it has now been submitted to the Ramaswamy Committee which will be looking into the recommendations and suggesting ways of implementation.

SHRI N.K. SINGH: When are you expecting the Ramaswamy Committee Report?

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: At the earliest possible.

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: Sir, there is a heavy demand for IITs and higher education courses but the students from the rural areas are not getting admission in those courses. While revamping the entrance examination system, will the Government consider starting new IITs? There has been a commitment by the hon. Prime Minister to start a new IIT in Kerala. Will it also be considered?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does it relate to the question? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: Yes, Sir, it is related to the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: How?

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: Sir, heavy demand is there but the rural students are not getting admission. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: But, does this relate to this question?

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: It is related to this question, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*... Genuine demands are related to the students from rural areas. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: It does not arise out of this question, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Thank you, Sir. Sir, education brings equality. That is what Dr. Ambedkar had said. With this type of examinations, particularly in the IITs, which is the high-end engineering course, my observation is that more and more students from urban areas, more so, who have taken education in English medium, tend to get admitted in the IITs. The answer which has

been given talks about analytical and communication skill. When you say communication skills, which language do you believe in? Do you believe that only English language communication skills are skills, otherwise there are no skills?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question please.

DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: I would ask the hon. Minister, is there any method by which children from the rural areas, those who take education in the regional languages can also pass these examinations?

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, it is here that we need the support of the State Governments. We are looking at whether we can introduce a core curriculum in subjects like Science and Mathematics which would enable the children right across the country, be it in urban areas or rural areas, to have equal chances in the common entrance examinations. Definitely, Sir, unless the State Governments come on board and strengthen the elementary education, can not a child in the rural area have the same opportunity as a child in the urban areas. I am sure, all Members in the House will agree with me that today English is the global language. ...*(Interruptions)*...

डा. राम प्रकाश : सर, सवाल है कि क्या ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : डा. राम प्रकाश, आप supplementary पूछिए, इस तरह से interfere नहीं कीजिए।

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, we respect all regional languages and many State Governments in their own elementary schools have actually introduced elementary education in the regional languages where English is a subject and when the child transits into class six, English becomes the medium of instruction. These have been the steps that have been taken by various State Governments. This, we hope, would definitely give the child advantage of the English in taking the entrance examinations as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Ram Prakash, please. Please observe the Rule. Ask for supplementaries, you will get it. Thank you.

डा. राम प्रकाश : धन्यवाद सभापति जी, मेरा प्रश्न सीधा है कि कम्युनिकेशन स्किल से अर्थ यहां केवल मात्र इंग्लिश लिया जा रहा है, जबकि सभी प्रान्तों ने अपनी प्रादेशिक भाषाओं में बच्चों को पढ़ाना प्रारम्भ कर दिया है। अंग्रेजी माध्यम को अनिवार्य करना देहात के बच्चों के साथ पूरी तरह से अन्याय है। क्या मंत्री महोदया यह आश्वासन देंगी कि उन्हें प्रांतीय भाषाओं के अन्दर पढ़ने और इम्तिहान देने की अनुमति होगी?

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, we have never imposed it. Elementary education is with the State Government. And as I have mentioned earlier, some of the State Governments have introduced English as a subject in the elementary classes and transition to English as a medium of instruction takes place when it comes to upper elementary classes. These have been conscientious decisions taken by some State Governments. No language has been imposed from the Central Government on the State Schools. Whatever reforms we can bring in, they are restricted only to those schools affiliated to the CBSE Board. Out of twelve lakh schools that we have in our country. ...*(Interruptions)*...

डा. राम प्रकाश : सर, प्रश्न का सीधा जवाब नहीं आ रहा है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... नहीं, आप इस तरह से इंटरफेयर नहीं करेंगे ...*(व्यवधान)*... इससे कोई फायदा नहीं है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

डा. राम प्रकाश : सर, ये प्रश्न का सीधा जवाब नहीं दे रही हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री नरेश चन्द्र अग्रवाल : सर, यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : नरेश जी आप बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*... प्लीज ...*(व्यवधान)*... इससे क्या फायदा होगा ...*(व्यवधान)*... कोई किसी की बात नहीं सुन रहा है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: English is a global language. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please hear the answer. आप ज़रा बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*... एक मिनट, आप पहले बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*... बैठ जाइए न, प्लीज ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, if I may be allowed to complete my answer. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सर, इस देश की राष्ट्र भाषा हिन्दी है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : सत्यव्रत जी, प्लीज बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सर, संविधान के माध्यम से आपने हिन्दी को राष्ट्र भाषा का दर्जा दिया है, लेकिन आप अंग्रेज़ी को आगे बढ़ाते चले जा रहे हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*... यह बिल्कुल गलत है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : देखिए, आप सवाल पूछ रहे हैं, सवाल का जवाब सुन रहे हैं या लैक्चर दे रहे हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: Sir, English is a ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please one minute. आप ज़रा बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*... पहले आप मंत्री जी की बात सुन लीजिए ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप ज़रा बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सर, हिन्दुस्तान की राजभाषा हिन्दी है ...*(व्यवधान)*... 80 फीसदी लोग हिन्दुस्तान में हिन्दी समझते हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री वी. हनुमंत राव : सर, यह हिन्दी भाषा का अपमान है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : हम पूछना चाहते हैं कि हिन्दुस्तानियों के ऊपर अंग्रेज़ी क्यों लादी जा रही है? ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: it is an official language. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सभापति : सत्यव्रत जी, ज़रा आप बात तो सुन लीजिए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please one minute ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Mr. Chairman Sir, I respect the sentiments of the distinguished. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी : हिन्दी में जवाब दीजिए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री कपिल सिब्बल : आप यहां अंग्रेज़ी में क्यों बोलते हैं? ...*(व्यवधान)*... आपके लीडर ऑफ़ अपोज़ीशन अंग्रेज़ी में बोलते हैं कि नहीं? ...*(व्यवधान)*...

डा. राम प्रकाश : सवाल हिन्दी में किया है, तो जवाब भी हिन्दी में ही दिया जाए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : मंत्री जी ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : अहलुवालिया जी, प्लीज़ ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री कपिल सिब्बल : आप लीडर ऑफ़ अपोज़ीशन को बोलिए कि हिन्दी में बोलें ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: How can they compel him to speak in a particular language? ...*(Interruptions)*... We are all permitted to speak in English. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us not start a totally different debate. Please listen to the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: I agree with you. ...*(Interruptions)*... They must tell the Leader of the Opposition to always speak in Hindi. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us not get into this. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, this is. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, let it not be a convention. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Siva, Mr. Raja, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... नरेश जी, आप बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*... प्लीज़, ज़रा आप भी बैठ जाइए, बात सुन लीजिए ...*(व्यवधान)*... प्लीज़ ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री कपिल सिब्बल : माननीय सदस्यों की जो बात है, वह कुछ हद तक सही भी है, लेकिन हमारे जेईई इग्ज़ामिनेशन हिन्दी में ही होते हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*... ऐसी कोई बात नहीं है, लेकिन ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : भई, प्लीज़, प्लीज़ ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री कपिल सिब्बल : जेईई इग्ज़ामिनेशन हिन्दी में भी होते हैं और अंग्रेजी में भी होते हैं, दोनों लैंग्वेजिज़ में जेईई इग्ज़ामिनेशन होते हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*... दूसरी बात, जहां तक आईआईटी का सवाल है, I just want to mention ...*(Interruptions)*... The point is that the IIT system is an autonomous system. The Government does not impose decision making on the IITs system. Now it is for the IIT Council to decide how they are to conduct examinations; in which language they are to conduct examinations; whether the course material is available in those languages or not. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सर, ...*(व्यवधान)*... क्या IIT Council संविधान के ऊपर है? ...*(व्यवधान)*... क्या IIT Council संविधान से भी ऊपर है? ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री कपिल सिब्बल : संविधान यह नहीं कहता कि ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : सर, ...*(व्यवधान)*... मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : देखिए, यह बात गलत रास्ते पर जा रही है। ...*(व्यवधान)*... इसको आगे मत बढ़ाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... One minute please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सभापति जी, ...*(व्यवधान)*... क्या यह संविधान से भी ऊपर है? ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: One minute please. ...*(Interruptions)*... One minute please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Ahluwaliaji, just one minute please. ...*(Interruptions)*... आप ज़रा बैठ जाइए। ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप ज़रा बैठ जाइए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री विनय कटियार : सर, ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : नहीं, नहीं, आप बैठ जाइए। ...**(व्यवधान)**... मेरी बात सुन लीजिए। ...**(व्यवधान)**... अगर हाउस की यह इच्छा है कि इस पर डिबेट हो, तो इसके लिए नोटिस दीजिए, मगर वचैश्चन ऑवर को डिस्बर्ब मत कीजिए। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सर, ...**(व्यवधान)**... यह संविधान से ऊपर नहीं है। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question has been answered. ...**(Interruptions)**... Question No.122. ...**(Interruptions)**...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सर, इस सवाल का जवाब आना चाहिए। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Sir, My question? ...**(Interruptions)**...

श्री सभापति : यह जो हो रहा है, वह क्या है? ...**(व्यवधान)**... बहस ही तो हो रही है! ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : सर, यह स्वाभिमान की बात है। ...**(व्यवधान)**... यह राष्ट्रभाषा के सम्मान की बात है। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री सभापति : देखिए, प्लीज़। ...**(व्यवधान)**... यह सवाल आई.आई.टी. के इम्तिहान का है। आप उस पर बोलिए। ...**(व्यवधान)**... राष्ट्रभाषा की बात नहीं हो रही है। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : राष्ट्रभाषा स्वाभिमान का विषय है। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री शिवानन्द तिवारी : हिन्दी, तमिल, बांग्ला, आदि सब भाषाएं हों ...**(व्यवधान)**...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: In regional languages also. ...**(Interruptions)**...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we go on to Question No.122? ...**(Interruptions)**...

Can we go on to Question No.122? ...**(Interruptions)**...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : सर, संविधान में जो बातें लिखी गई हैं, उनको ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नकवी : सर, ...**(व्यवधान)**...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: You cannot confine it to one language. ...**(Interruptions)**...

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Sir, My question? ...**(Interruptions)**...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : IIT Council संविधान से ऊपर नहीं है और संविधान में हिन्दी को राष्ट्रभाषा का दर्जा दिया गया है। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री सभापति : आप बैठ जाइए। आप क्या कर रहे हैं? ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : IIT Council उसकी उपेक्षा क्यों कर रहा है? ...(व्यवधान)...

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Sir, My question? ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सभापति : आप ज़रा बैठ जाइए। ...(व्यवधान)... जोशी जी, प्लीज़ ...(व्यवधान)... आप ज़रा बैठ जाइए।
...(व्यवधान)...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : सर, राष्ट्रभाषा स्वाभिमान का विषय है। ...(व्यवधान)... इसके लिए डिबेट नहीं होता ...(व्यवधान)... इसके लिए बहस नहीं होती। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : सवाल आई.आई.टी. के इम्तिहान का है, राष्ट्रभाषा का नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी : सभापति जी, ...(व्यवधान)... सर, हमें आपका संरक्षण चाहिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : आप बैठ जाइए। ...(व्यवधान)... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Civil Services examination can be conducted in regional languages also. ...*(Interruptions)*... How can we write it? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us go on to Question No. 122. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, we want official status for our regional language. Till that time, we have to rely upon English only. ...*(Interruptions)*... All the regional languages need official status. Till that time, we have to rely upon English. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : हम दक्षिण के बंधुओं से कहना चाहते हैं कि न हम तमिल विरोधी हैं और न मलयालम विरोधी हैं, बल्कि हम अंग्रेजी विरोधी हैं। ...(व्यवधान)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I request all hon. Members to please allow the Question Hour to proceed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री ब्रजेश पाठक : हम यह चाहते हैं कि क्षेत्रीय भाषाएं भी साथ में रहें। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री नरेश चन्द्र अग्रवाल : सभापति महोदय, ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री शिवानन्द तिवारी : सर, ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : बैठ जाइए, प्लीज़। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : सभापति महोदय, ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : मैंने क्या कहा? ...(व्यवधान)... मैंने यही कहा कि इस सवाल में ...(व्यवधान)... Don't attribute remarks. It is wrong. ...*(Interruptions)*... Just one minute please. Please resume your

places. ...*(Interruptions)*... The question was about the language in a particular examination. The hon. Minister's answer was about that. Now, some hon. Members had different views on it, and I said, if you want to discuss that matter relating to the basic question whether that examination should be conducted in this language or that language, please give a notice. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया : सर, ...*(व्यवधान)*... 14 भाषाएँ मानी गई हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House is adjourned for fifteen minutes.

The House then adjourned at twenty three minutes past eleven of the clock.

The House reassembled at thirty-eight minutes past eleven of the clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q.No.122.

डा. राम प्रकाश : सभापति जी, पहले प्रश्न संख्या 121 का उत्तर दिया जाए। ऐसा लगता है कि ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : आप बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*... Question 122.

श्री नरेश चन्द्र अग्रवाल : माननीय सभापति जी, मैंने बहुत specific question पूछा था ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : आप Question Hour के बाद बात कर लीजिएगा ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री नरेश चन्द्र अग्रवाल : सभापति जी, यह हिन्दी के सम्मान की बात है। देश में 2 परसेंट अंग्रेज़ी बोलने वाले अगर देश को ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री कपिल सिब्बल : हम हिन्दी को पूरा सम्मान करते हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री विनय कटियार : यहां किसी भाषा का विरोध नहीं है। सवाल यह है कि किस तरह से भाषाओं को ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : आप दोनों एक साथ बोल रहे हैं, मैं किसकी बात सुनूँ? ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप लोग प्लीज़ बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री विनय कटियार : लोग क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं में परीक्षा दे सकें, क्या इसकी कोई व्यवस्था आप करेंगे? ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : आप प्लीज़ बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री विनय कटियार : सरकार तो ये लोग ही चला रहे हैं। सरकार सर्वोपरि है या कोई संस्थान सर्वोपरि है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : आप प्लीज बैठ जाइए ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री नरेश चन्द्र अग्रवाल : श्रीमन्, आप पूरे राष्ट्र के हैं, लेकिन उत्तर प्रदेश के भी हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : नरेश जी, प्लीज, बैठ जाइए। Question No. 122.

Telephone towers in tribal areas

*122. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of telephone towers have been installed in tribal areas of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, etc., which have not been activated;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when Government would prevail upon the telephone operators to activate these towers and provide communication facilities to the inhabitants there?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) All the 604 telephone towers installed by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in the tribal areas of Orissa have been activated. Some of the towers installed by BSNL in tribal areas of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are still to be activated. 977 telephone towers in Jharkhand and 652 telephone towers in Chhattisgarh are activated and only 46 telephone towers in Jharkhand and 107 telephone towers in Chhattisgarh are still to be activated.

(b) The reasons for delay in activating these mobile towers in the States of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are given below:

(i) Extreme remote areas

(ii) Tough terrain