

(c) BharatNet is a project of mega nature and the GPs are widely dispersed across the country in rural and remote areas. All out efforts are being made to expeditiously implement the project. The delay in the initial implementation of the project was on account of:

- (i) Delay in the initial commencement of the project as the work on the project began in the second half of 2014 due to field survey of GPs and pilot testing of the technology model.
- (ii) Only one media that is underground OFC to cover GPs, and Right of Way (RoW) issues.

Since May 2016, with the constitution of the following committees, the issues are being resolved timely:

- (i) Empowered Committee under Secretary, Department of Telecommunications.
- (ii) Steering Committee under Administrator, Universal Service Obligation Fund.
- (iii) State Committee under Chief General Manager (CGM), BSNL for resolution of State level issues.

Nuclear waste dumping station at Kudankulam

*74. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal to construct nuclear waste dumping station at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether any other nuclear plant has also been selected for nuclear waste dumping in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) No, Sir, However, an engineered Waste Management Facility is provided at every nuclear power plant before it commences operations.

- (b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.
- (c) No, Sir.

Administrative control of Council of Architecture

*75. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has decided to transfer the administrative control of the Council of Architecture, established under the Architects Act, 1972, from the Ministry of Human Resource Development to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs; and

- (b) if so, the details thereof and by when this transfer would be effected?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) Does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Plan to make use of nuclear wastes

614. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the various steps that have been taken and other new initiatives that have been planned to make use of the wastes being produced by Atomic energy plants in our country;

(b) whether these initiatives are being used and implemented in the proper way so as to avoid the bad impact of these wastes on the living beings; and

- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN ATOMIC ENERGY (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) India has adopted "closed fuel cycle", where spent nuclear fuel is regarded as a material of resource. Closed fuel cycle aims at reprocessing of spent fuel for recovery of Uranium and Plutonium and recycling them back to reactor as fuel. This finally leads to a very small percentage of residual material present in spent nuclear fuel requiring their management as radioactive waste.

Safe management of radioactive waste has been accorded high priority right from the inception of our nuclear energy programme. High level radioactive waste also contains many useful isotopes like Caesium-137, Strontium-90, Ruthenium-106 etc. With the advent of new technologies based on partitioning of waste, emphasis is accorded to separation and recovery of these useful radio-isotopes so as to make use of the waste for various societal applications.

- (b) Yes Sir.

(c) Initiatives/advancements w.r.t. partitioning of the waste have been implemented safely and successfully enabling recovery of useful radio-isotopes like Caesium-137, Strontium-90, Ruthenium-106 etc. and their deployment for societal applications. Utmost emphasis is given to waste volume minimization, effective containment and isolation of radio-activity followed by near zero discharge of radioactivity to the environment. As a waste management philosophy, no waste in any physical form is released/disposed to the