

**THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE):** (a) The U. S. Government is fully aware of India's consistent stand on Diego Garcia. It may be added, however, that the Government of India does not regard Diego Garcia as a bilateral problem between India and the United States.

(b) The U. S. A. have taken note of India's stand which is in accord with the stand taken by an overwhelming majority of the littoral and hinterland states of the Indian Ocean.

#### India's Foreign Policy

691. **SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA:**

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government contemplate to modify their foreign policy or propose to continue the same policy;

(b) the modifications, if any, proposed to be made;

(c) whether U.S.A. and U.K. have shown some shift in their earlier attitude towards India; and

(d) if so, the efforts being made to improve relations with these countries?

**THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE):** (a) and (b). Foreign policy of any country cannot be static and while the Government of India have emphasized the basic continuity in our foreign policy attitudes, there will necessarily have to be the proper interplay between this and the need to effect changes as are necessary to preserve complete independence based on our national interests and independent judgment on international issues.

(c) The smooth transition and changeover of Government of India has been welcomed in both the USA and U.K. President Carter has publicly expressed his admiration of the efficacy of our democratic system.

(d) Our efforts have always been to maintain an atmosphere of friendly and close relation on the basis of equality and reciprocity not only with the U. S. A. and the U. K. but with all the countries of the world.

#### Language Cells in Indian Missions Abroad

692. **SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR DHARA:** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any efforts are being made to equip our diplomatic units, including embassies, High Commissions and other channels of diplomacy with language cells so that our missions abroad are able to transact business with Governments of the countries to which they are accredited either in the language of that country or in the language of our Union;

(b) how long will it take for them to be able to transact business in the language of those countries in Hindi;

(c) which of the units are reluctant in pursuing the policy and the reasons therefor; and

(d) remedial action contemplated to be taken?

**THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE):** (a) All countries transact business in their own language or in a European language. Foreign Service Officers on entering service are allotted one compulsory foreign language and there after are also allotted optional languages. They are required to pass an examination in Hindi before confirmation. Their language skills are kept in mind in their postings abroad to Missions. For routine work involving the language of the country our Missions utilise local staff recruited in those countries, or India-based Interpreters/Translators. This Ministry has secured the approval of the Cabinet for the creation of a high level Cadre of Interpreters. Qualifications, recruitment rules, etc., are being finalised. It has been considered desirable that

these Interpreters should have a working knowledge of Hindi also.

(b) Government have been able to transact business satisfactorily in Missions abroad either in the language of the country to which the Mission is accredited or in English. The Ministry tries to ensure that all Missions have some Hindi knowing personnel on their staff.

(c) None.

(d) Does not arise.

#### **Introduction of Rural Health Scheme**

693. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR DHARA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in the direction of introducing the rural health scheme as enunciated by the Ministry some time back;

(b) the stages in which the scheme is to be launched and the areas to start with; and

(c) the main features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAJ NARAIN): (a) The draft plan of 'Rural Health Scheme' was discussed in the Health Ministers' Conference held in New Delhi on 28th-29th April, 1977. On the basis of the consensus arrived at the meeting the State Governments have been requested to send their approach papers which are still awaited from some of them.

(b) As decided in the Health Ministers' Conference, the Scheme, as far as possible, will be launched on 2nd October, 1977. If there will be any difficulty in starting the programme in all Primary Health Centres simultaneously, priority would be given to areas populated by Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and most backward classes.

(c) Under the Rural Health Scheme there is a provision for selection of the community health workers by the com-

munity itself. Such community health workers will provide basic preventive, promotive and curative services at the level of the community. This also provides for improvement in the quality of the professional services by way of increasing the number of multi-purpose workers, induction of a large number of doctors in the rural areas and making medical colleges responsible for total health of selected primary health centres. It envisages training of about 5.8 lakh community health workers in a period of two years and training of equal number of dais to look after the deliveries, ante-natal and postnatal cares in the rural areas. The details of the scheme are, however, under examination of Finance Ministry and Planning Commission.

#### **Increase in Rates and Securities in Telephone and other P. & T. Departments**

694. SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of increase made by the Government in the rates of Securities in the telephone and other P. & T. departments in the last two years;

(b) the approximate amount of gain received by the Government due to those increases;

(c) the facilities provided by the Government to the people in this connection in the last two years; and

(d) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to improve the services of the telephone of P&T. Department?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b). An amount equal to one year's rental is taken as security for telephone charges against each telephone. Since 1-3-76 annual rental of all telephone connections has increased by Rs. 100 per connection. This amount is not made use of by the department except in case of default in payment of dues by the subscriber.