

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:148  
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2003  
LINKING OF MISSIONS  
SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI;SUNDER LAL TIWARI

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government had formulated an ambitious scheme to link its Missions located abroad with latest communication techniques and had also purchased essential equipment for the purpose;
- (b) if so, the total expenditure incurred therein and the present position of the equipment purchased;
- (c) whether this scheme has now been discontinued; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) to (d) A statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.148 T  
ANSWERED ON 30.07.2003

The High Frequency Radio Communication (HFRC) Project was initiated in 1987 with a view to providing a reliable and independent standby communications arrangement with selected Indian Missions and Posts abroad for use during emergencies and the shutting down of local telecom networks. A sanction of Rs.17 crores was issued for the project in 1991 (a revised sanction was subsequently issued for little over Rs.31.59 crores in 1992). The project faced technical and operational problems after implementation, including high recurring maintenance cost.

2. In 1997 the Public Accounts Committee asked that this project be re-evaluated by an Expert Group. While agreeing that wireless provides the only dependable means of communication that does not require support of a local network, due to continuing operational and technical problems as also availability of alternatives based on more modern technology, the Expert Group recommended in January 2000 that the HFRC network be terminated.

3. In accordance with the directions of the Expert Group the HFRC network was shut down in mid-2001. The equipment is being disposed off to the best advantage of Government.