

**Foreign Secretary's visit to Washington**

\*14. SHRI R.N. RAKESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Foreign Secretary visited Washington in the month of September, 1990;

(b) if so, the purpose of the visit;

(c) the outcome of the talks held with US leaders; and

(d) whether any agreement was signed during the visit and if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA):  
(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The visit of the Foreign Secretary was a part of the process of periodic Indo-US bilateral consultations.

(c) Bilateral issues were reviewed and significant international developments were discussed at meetings held at various levels. The talks created a better understanding of each others; perceptions on a wide range of issues.

(d) No, Sir.

**Shortage of Telephone Exchange Equipments**

\*15. SHRI Y.S. RAJA SEKHAR REDDY:  
SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) is facing shortage of

telephone exchange equipments causing delay in the replacement of old exchanges;

(b) if so, its impact on the functioning of telephone system; and

(c) the steps taken to meet the shortage and remedial measures taken to improve the functioning of the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (DR. SANJAY SINGH): (a) to (c). Life expired and worn out exchanges to the tune of 89,000 lines have been replaced in the last 4 years in the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam in Bombay and Delhi. There is a programme to replace another 70,600 lines during this financial year and 98,800 during the next financial year. This is no doubt that there is a general shortage of switching equipment in the country. In spite of this the programme of replacing old and worn-out exchanges is being carried out in MTNL. Generally the performance of old electromechanical exchanges is inferior to the electronic exchanges. Therefore the performance of the system with electromechanical exchanges remains relatively poorer than with a total system with electronic exchanges. In the total 8th Plan period, it is proposed to replace 3,18,000 lines of the old exchanges. Other measures taken to improve the functioning of the MTNL are:

Retraining of the Staff to improve the skills and Knowledge; and

Large scale input of the modern state-of-art equipment.

[Translation]

**Alleged Irregularities in I.V.R.I. Bareilly**

\*16. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: