

Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2769
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2023

TIME DISSEMINATION PROJECT

2769. SHRI KURUVA GORANTLA MADHAV:

Will the Minister of **CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION** उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) the reasons for delay in the establishment of the Time Dissemination Project, considering its impact on 57 societal, industrial and international trade as well as on national security and cyber crimes; and
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to expedite the process and ensure swift finalization of the Project?

ANSWER

उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण राज्य मंत्री
(श्री अश्विनी कुमार चौबे)

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) : Precise time is essential for country's strategic and non-strategic sectors. Considering the importance of dissemination of Indian Standard Time (IST), the project has been undertaken by the Department of Consumer Affairs in association with National Physical Laboratory (NPL) and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). The project aims to create technology and infrastructure to disseminate IST from five different locations across India to all the telecom operators, power grids, financial institutions, data centres, common citizens etc. These locations are the Regional Reference Standard Laboratories of this Department at Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Faridabad and Guwahati.

ISRO is supporting NPL and this Department towards the technical aspects of the Time Dissemination Project viz. system level design of architecture of the time dissemination solution and for technical evaluation of the bids received against the various tenders floated by NPL.

NPL is responsible for design development, procurement and installation of highly sophisticated timing instrument for the project. The project has been intricately intertwined with a series of government interventions, reviews and official extensions, aligning with established rules, guidelines, and processes. Various factors, each addressed in accordance with government directives, have contributed to the project's timeline.

Factors responsible for establishing the timing centres and dissemination of Indian Standard Time are:

- (1) **Precision & stability:** Developing a robust time dissemination system involves dealing with technical complexities, such as precision in timekeeping, synchronization across diverse systems and maintaining consistency. The project needs robust security measures and protocols.
- (2) **Coordination with Stakeholders:** Coordinating with government agencies, industries and other stakeholders is crucial.
- (3) **Emerging Technologies and Research:** The latest advancements in technology in timekeeping and dissemination methods needs to be incorporated in the system to be established in the country.
- (4) **Challenges in International Procurement:** Acknowledging the scarcity of critical components in the international market, coupled with uncertainties due to Covid-19 and geopolitical situations, the project team of NPL and ISRO navigated the complexities of international state-of-the-art procurement.
- (5) **Strategic Importance:** The strategic importance of accurate time dissemination for various sectors, intensifies the scrutiny and complexity of the project, leading to delays.

The project's timeline has been intricately managed in accordance with government mandates, complex specification and procurement processes, global economic challenges and the unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, efforts are being made to mitigate the challenges to ensure the successful completion of this critical national project.

(b) : Government has taken various proactive measures to expedite the Time Dissemination Project, ensuring a swift finalization such as:

- (1) Completion of Civil Work at RRSL, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Faridabad and Guwahati
- (2) Strategic Decision Making and Collaboration with ISRO
- (3) Efficient Procurement Management through NPL in association with ISRO
- (4) Monthly meetings with all stake holders under the chairmanship of Secretary (Consumer Affairs)
- (5) Convincing Russian supplier to supply atomic clocks at Government level
- (6) Frequent interaction with service providers for finalization of optical fiber for time transfer
- (7) ISRO is geared up to carry out the impending activities of timescale integration, testing, validation, site commissioning, training, etc.

These concerted efforts, aligned with government directives and approvals, underscore the commitment to expedite the Time Dissemination Project, addressing challenges and ensuring the success and timely completion of the project.
