

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(Part I—Questions and Answers)

OFFICIAL REPORT

689

690

HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Monday, 17th August, 1953

*The House met at a Quarter Past
Eight of the Clock*

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

POSTAL FRANKING MACHINES

*538. **Shri Bansal:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the parties with which Government have arrived at agreements for the sale of postal franking machines, and the terms and conditions of such agreements;

(b) what steps have been taken by Government to ensure that the cost of the machine and maintenance charges charged by these dealers and their agents are fair; and

(c) whether Government have examined the possibility of manufacturing such machines in India?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a)
1. M/s Hoare Miller and Co. Ltd., Calcutta.

2. M/s Kilburn & Co. Ltd., Calcutta.

The terms and conditions are shown in the copies of the agreement placed on the table of the House. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 16.]

(b) To ensure that the cost of the machine is fair, tenders are invited.

(c) Not yet.

351 P.S.D.

Shri Bansal: Is it a fact that these two companies Messrs. Hoare Miller and Co., and Messrs. Kilburn & Co. are subsidiaries of the same parent company?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I do not know much about the internal history of these companies. But, they have been holding our contracts, for a long time; the first one from 1924 and the second since 1946.

Shri Bansal: What is important for the House to know is whether it is a monopoly.

Shri Raj Bahadur: It amounts to that; but that is not intended, and we are free to enter into contracts with other concerns also.

Shri V. P. Nayar: The hon. Minister stated that these two companies are incorporated in India. May I know whether the hon. Minister has any idea of the share of foreign capital in these two companies. Messrs. Hoare Miller & Co., and Messrs. Kilburn & Co.?

Shri Raj Bahadur: May I suggest to the hon. Minister that he should put that question to the Minister of Commerce and Industry?

Shri V. P. Nayar: I only asked whether the hon. Minister had any idea.

Shri A. M. Thomas: It was stated that some experts are examining the question of mechanisation generally. Have they submitted their report? What are their main recommendations?

Shri Raj Bahadur: They have not yet submitted their recommendations.

Shri T. N. Singh: May I know, when the Government enters into contracts with one or two companies, whether they try to go into antecedents of those one or more concerns?

Shri Raj Bahadur: In the present case we did. The antecedents are that both the companies have been functioning for this purpose since as early as 1924 and 1946 respectively.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know how many machines the Government have purchased from these concerns so far?

Shri Raj Bahadur: About 2499.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: May I know whether the Government advertised and whether Government had offers from any other company?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Advertisements were put in as many as 4 or 5 leading daily papers, inviting tenders. The advertisements were in *The Hindu* of Madras, *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, *The Bombay Chronicle*, *The Hindustan Times*, etc. only two tenders were received.

सेठ गोविन्द दास : क्या यह बात सही है कि इन दोनों कम्पनियों में कोई भारतीय पूंजी नहीं है और जब यह टेंडर मांगे गये उस वक्त क्या किसी ऐसी कम्पनी ने भी टेंडर दिये थे जो भारतीय पूंजी की कम्पनी है ?

श्री राज बहादुर : इन दोनों कम्पनियों के अलावा किसी दूसरी कम्पनी ने टेंडर नहीं दिया । प्रश्न के पहले भाग का उत्तर मैं दे चुका हूँ ।

Shri Bansal: Is it a fact that recently these companies asked their customers to change the terms of the contract of repairs of these machines and have begun charging Rs. 40/- per annum as a lump sum charge?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Their functioning is governed by the terms of the agreement with the Government of India. Even the purchasers have to obtain licences before these persons can sell out their machines to the particular purchasers. As such I do not think that any such claim can be made. I will, however, go into the question if the hon. Member would furnish me with details.

WIRELESS PLANNING AND CO-ORDINATION BRANCH

*539. **Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha:**

(a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state whether Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Branch has started its work of planning radio services in India?

(b) If so, what would be the nature of its work?

(c) Who are the members of this Branch and what are their special and technical qualifications?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) (i) Co-ordination and assignment of frequencies to all wireless operations in India;

(ii) regulating, planning and administering the usages of frequencies and the radio spectrum in India;

(iii) international conferences and agreements and the implementation of the decisions taken at these conferences and all associated work, so far as wireless is concerned;

(iv) negotiation with other countries and all associated matters connected with wireless communications;

(v) licensing, regulations and associated matters in the field of wireless, except Broadcast Receivers;

(vi) exploring the ether for free channels, undertaking technical studies and research and conducting such monitoring as is necessary for discharging these functions; and

(vii) discharge all other responsibilities of the Ministry of Communications