

from outside. But now that the Cable Television Act has come into force from 25th March, 1995, after having been passed by Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, many of the State Governments, who have to ensure that the programmes coming are within the confines and the purview of the AIR and Doordarshan programmes, advertising code as well as Cable Television regulation, have not set up enforcement agency so far. It will take a little more time. We are in touch with it and if necessary, if such anti-national act like denigrating the Father of the Nation is done, then residuary power is there; we will have to prohibit or ban it.

MR. SPEAKER : I think, probably, he wanted to know only that.

[Translation]

SHRI RABI RAY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reply given by the hon. Minister to a question put by Shri Hannan Mollah is unsatisfactory. The militants were holed up inside Charar-e-sharief since February and the whole country was aware of it. I believe that the Government's attitude is that it should not be made a medium of Government propaganda. Noondu Rishi symbolises Hinduism and Kashrianism. If the Noondu Rishi tradition had been telecast then it would have imparted folk education to people and they would have been able to see as to how those militants were trapped inside and that they were committed to pulling down charar-e-Sharief. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether it was not considered to telecast such programmes which go on to augment India's composite culture?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Why was it not used to educate the people on matters like this?

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Sir, the original question is on 'Chitrah' and 'Rangoli', and we are going into the whole gamut.

I will have to find out and let you know on the matter.

MR. SPEAKER : You are right. Though it may not be based on factual information, but then, these are very pertinent questions.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Sir, about the mercenaries and the shrine, the role of TV is an important thing. I would not like to give you half-hearted answer.

MR. SPEAKER : Okay.

Intelligent Network Services

*604. SHRI RAM SINGH KASHWAN :
SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications are planning to introduce intelligent network services; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) and (b). Feasibility studies for introduction of intelligent network services in the Department of Telecommunications are being carried out.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM SINGH KASHWAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what is the aim behind the launch of Intelligence Network Service? What do the Government aim to gain from it and when will it become operative?

SHRI SUKH RAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have reached such a stage in the modernisation of our network from where we can provide several services to the customers. Though at present we are thinking of only three services. First, there is free-phone services.

[English]

The Free Phone Service is known as 'call 800 Service' in USA.

[Translation]

Under this service, if the caller makes a free call to a company or a Trading House then its expenses will not be borne by the caller but by the Trading House/ Company only because this way it will get advertisement.

The second service is information service. It includes premium rate service also which has a specific number and after dialling this number you can get trade information from a Stock Exchange, marketing information or astrological predictions or what items are to be taken up in Parliament in next few days and how it will be done and what achievements are likely to be made by you, and that... (Interruptions) If you would like to know about your horoscope, or your marriage or about your Stars, etc. you will be able to get such information through that number ... (Interruptions) We will provide the service.

The Third Service is called private network. (Interruptions) Will you let me speak or will you go on saying what you want to do? Under the Third Service you may avail of the PABX Service from DOT network in particular hour and you have to pay for it. It can be used by the private individuals also. You may use this service on your PABX for few hours. For example, if a company has its branches in various parts of the country and you can avail this service at any place where you desire.

This way we are soon going to introduce these three services. As per my information, the USA earns 40 per cent of its revenue from the various services under intelligence network. We are not planning to start a lot many services in it. At present we are starting it as a pilot project or on trail basis. (Interruptions)

SHRI SUKH RAM : I have said pilot project and not Rajesh Pilot...*(Interruptions)* We are going to start that. We had started large digital switching system last year. Its technology is available. In its software, upgradation is to be done. This technology can be modernised and introduced in it.

SHRI RAM SINGH KASHWAN : Will it increase the scope of bugging or telephone-tapping? If so, then have you considered it?

SHRI SUKH RAM : It is not my responsibility to do so.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : The hon. Member wants to know whether tapping of telephones will become easier.

SHRI SUKH RAM : Tapping is not done by the Department of Telecommunications.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You are aware that anything spoken while sitting, will not go on record.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the telecom services in India are being expanded on a large scale. The technology is also being upgraded considerably. Right now, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that he is going to introduce very sophisticated telecom services in the country. He has also stated that a feasibility study is already being carried out. My question is whether this feasibility study is carried out by any consultants from abroad or within the Department. I would also like to know whether these services will be introduced only in the metropolitan cities or throughout the country. Lastly, I want to know as to when this study has been undertaken and when it is expected to come to the stage of real work.

SHRI SUKH RAM : For the time being, these services are confined to the metropolitan cities only. The study is being done by our own experts. As regards the new large digital switching system which has been introduced about a year ago, of course, taken up the matter with the suppliers as to how to upgrade the software and how to modify the system accordingly because they have to do this work. I think in a few months' time we will be in a position to introduce the facility. We can introduce the facility only when the suppliers upgrade their software and modify it suitably.

Freedom of Expression in DD Programmes

*605. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are any norms regarding censorship by Doordarshan on current affairs and other

T.V. programmes to drop footage particularly those critical of Government functioning/policies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure freedom of expression in Doordarshan programmes in conformity with the recent judgement of the Supreme Court?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Doordarshan endeavours on a continuing basis to reflect all view points in its news and other programmes with objectivity and impartiality.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister's reply has really astonished us. I had asked if there were some norms in regard to censorship and the hon. Minister replied that there were none. Does it mean that Radio and Doordarshan enjoy absolute free hand in regard to censorship? Is there no demarcation-line? You can edit any news especially the news-item which is against the Government and which criticizes the Government. Democracy provides the right to criticize. Radio and Doordarshan are not the property of the Government party, in fact it is the property of the nation and only national feelings should be reflected through it.

Sir, how are Radio, T.V. functioning in the absence of any norms, any guidelines? May be that is why, Shri Kumaramangalam's interview, which was to be telecast by the Eye witness, was struck off from the list of T.V. programme because Eye Witness was told not to telecast this interview as it had criticized the policies of the ruling party and so, that programme was shelved by 'Eye Witness'. As a protest to that Shri Advani had refused to be shown on T.V. Do you want all the Political parties to boycott the television?

Sir, if a news-item is received by an official then in the absence of any norms or guidelines how would he decide as to what should be shown and what should be deleted? How can such unlimited, absolute powers can be delegated?

[English]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Sir, there is no policy or practice in the Doordarshan of censoring the footing. That does not mean that we have no norms. It is not as serious as the hon. Member...

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Is that the reply! ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Sir, I am explaining and still if the House feels that we should interfere - I thought that the House was interested in Prasar Bharati Bill and