

Telecom Regulatory Authority

439. DR. K.V.R. CHOWDARY:
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up any Telecom Regulatory Authority recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof with its main functions; and

(c) the time by which the above Authority is likely to start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The President has promulgated an ordinance on 27.1.1996 for constituting a statutory Telecom. Regulatory Authority of India.

(b) The Authority will have a serving or retired Judge of Supreme Court or a retired or serving Chief Justice of a High Court as its Chairman and not less than two and not exceeding four Members who will have the status of Secretary to Government of India. The Chairman shall be appointed for a period of 5 years and the Members for a period of 5 years or upto the age of 62 years whichever is earlier and will enjoy security of tenure. The functions and responsibilities of the Authority will include the following:

- (a) to ensure technical compatibility and effective inter-relationship between different service providers;
- (b) revenue sharing arrangement between different service providers;
- (c) protection of consumer interests;
- (d) national security interests;
- (e) lay down and ensure the time period for providing local and long distance circuits of telecommunications between different service providers;
- (f) facilitate competition and promote efficiency in the operation of telecommunication services so as to facilitate growth in such services;
- (g) to ensure compliance of licence conditions;

(h) fixation of tariffs for telecom service and ensuring price regulation;

(i) to ensure effective compliance of universal service obligations;

(j) resolution of disputes between service providers;

(k) rendering advice to the Government in the matters relating to the development of telecommunication technology and any other matter relatable to telecommunication industry in general; and

(l) levy fees at such rates and in respect of such services as may be determined by Regulations.

(c) The Authority is likely to start functioning shortly.

Cable Operators Federation of India

440. SHRI SHRAVAN KUMAR PATEL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a seminar on Cable T.V. and satellite transmission was held on August 27, 1993, at New Delhi with a view demand to set up a Central Cable Authority;

(b) if so, the suggestions and observations made during the Seminar;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Cable T.V. operators of India have also sought a better deal with regard to regulation of Cable T.V. operation; and

(e) if so, the response of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) and (b). A news item to this effect had come to the notice of the Government. In addition to voicing a demand for a central cable authority, participants in the said seminar had also wanted quality parameter of the programmes transmitted to be specified in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Bill, 1993.

(c) The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, as passed by the Parliament does not provide for the setting up of a central cable authority. It, however, contains a provision requiring the cable operators to replace their existing equipment with that conforming to the B.I.S. specifications within a period of three years from the date of the establishment and publication of the same by the Bureau of Indian Standards.