

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM : Birla Group of Industries have set up an Aluminium Plant in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar has adequate deposits of Bauxite required to produce Aluminium. The Government of Bihar had given lease to Birla Group on the condition that they would set up Aluminium Plant in Palamau District. But Birla Group of Industries have not set up the plant even after lapse of three years. I, therefore, want to ask as to why their lease should not be cancelled?

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, there is a bauxite recovery unit in Bihar. Bihar holds sixth position in regard to bauxite reserves in the country. There is already one unit in Bihar and another unit in Uttar Pradesh and both these units use bauxite that is recovered from Bihar only.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM : An agreement was signed between the Birla Group and the Government of Bihar. I, therefore, want to ask as to why the plant has not been set up even after lapse of 3 years whereas entire bauxite goes to Uttar Pradesh from Bihar and a plant can be set up there.

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : The Government will examine it. This practice is not readily available with us.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM : May I know from the hon'ble Minister names of industrial groups who have sent proposals to set up Aluminium Plant with names of places, where they propose to set up the same?

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : In the aluminium industry, about six tonnes of bauxite is required to produce one tonne of aluminium. There is proposal to set up the aluminium industry. After the new Mineral Policy, both foreign and domestic parties have been invited to set up the aluminium industry in the country.

[Translation]

SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is learnt that a large number of foreign proposals regarding investment have been received in respect of every state under the new economic policy. But Bihar is the only exception in respect of which no proposal for any significant investment has been received so far. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether any proposal from abroad has been received in respect of Bauxite and Aluminium and whether any such proposal has been received from Bihar?

[English]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : There is no foreign investment proposal received by the Governments.

[Translation]

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : My question is 382.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Who will give answer to 382.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : I have to ask a question.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have passed to the next question.

[Translation]

I had called twice-thrice but no one raised his hands.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : I had raised my hand but you did not bother.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Anyway, now the train has left.

Telephone on Demand under National Telecom Policy

*382. SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any decision to provide telephone connections on demand in the Metropolitan cities by April, 1997 under National Telecom Policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the progress made so far in this regard and the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (c). The National Telecom Policy 1994 envisages provision of telephone connection on demand by 1997. This was to be accomplished with the participation of private sector complementing the efforts of Government. The waiting list of the Metro districts as on 31st March, 1995 and 31st March, 1996 the targets for providing telephone connections during 1996-97 and the achievements during 1995-96 and upto 31st July, 1996 are given in Statement. Waiting period for telephone has gradually reduced. Availability of telephone on demand will depend upon the growth of demand the extent of participation of private sector in providing this service.

STATEMENT

Metro District	Waiting list As on 31.3.95	Telephone Connection Provided During 1995-96	Waiting list As on 31.3.96	DELs Target 1996-97	Achievements of 1996-97 upto 31.7.96
Delhi	130243	200070	9221	250000	42029
Mumbai	50039	200167	10572	250000	19709
Calcutta	52393	65107	47588	55000	11602
Madras	85743	60348	83187	75000	9712

[Translation]

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : May I know whether Government will be able to accomplish this task with participation of private sector? I want to draw your attention towards a statement made by Shri Sukh Ram, when he was a Minister in reply to a question that Government will accomplish this task independently whether his Department is unable to do this task independently and if so, the reasons therefor?

[English]

Why are you taking the help of the private sector?

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the policy of liberalisation was adopted with the concurrence of the august House and it was accepted keeping in view the increasing demand of telecommunication services and because it was felt that in the absence of participation of private sector, resources available with the Government were hardly sufficient to meet the demand. Keeping in view all these facts private sector was allowed to participate in this field. This policy was adopted and a target was fixed under this policy that by the end of 8th Five Year Plan i.e. by 1997 telephone connections will be provided on demand. However our Department is making every effort in this direction. This question relates to metropolitan cities and I would like to tell him in this connection that 82,000 telephone lines have been provided in the metropolitan cities but by the end of 31 March, 1997 we shall provide nearly 5½ lakh more telephone connections. As we are extending telephone facilities, demand is also increasing day by day. It is expected that even after providing 5½ lakh telephone connections we shall be having a waiting list of more than 1 lakh. Although our Department is taking every possible step to extend the facilities yet it will take sometime to provide telephone connection on demand without participation of private sector.

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : My next question is that hon'ble Minister should have given a fix date in the statement furnished upto March 31, 1996 that by March 31, 1997 there will be no waiting list in respect of Delhi. Had this been done, I would have not asked any more question. Now suppose, somebody applies on April 1, then after have much time, he would get his telephone connection? It will be very useful information for the people, if it is furnished.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Sir, he has put the right question. The present list in respect of Metropolitan cities will be exhausted by 31-7-1997. Even after this we shall be having a waiting list of more than 1 lakh but the present waiting list will be completed.

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : It may be correct but my question has not been answered. I had asked that is some body applies on April 1, after how much time—say 3-4-6 months—he would get his telephone connection?

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Sir, this is hypothetical question....(Interruptions)

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : No, this is not hypothetical but a practical question....(Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : One cannot say as to how much demand would increase by that time....(Interruptions)

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : The Government should inform the public that their demand would be met by a particular date.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : We hope that the demand for telephone connections would be more than one lakh on April 1, 1997....(Interruptions)

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : I had asked the time by which that demand would be met?

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Sir, about 25 percent of the connections being extended to the entire country are being allotted to metropolitan cities....(Interruptions)

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : Kindly let us know the time by which you will be able to complete the list—say 3-4 or 6 months.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Kindly do not ask such questions, otherwise you will say that we have misled the House.

SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : Alright, Sir, Thank you.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : We shall make every effort to extend telephone facilities and also reduce the waiting list to the minimum.

[English]

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the statement laid on the Table by the hon. Minister, it has been mentioned that the target for 1996-97 for Delhi and Mumbai is 250000 connections each. However, in the case of Madras it has been considerably reduced to 75000 connections. Will the hon. Minister take steps to increase the target for Madras for 1996-97 from the present 75000 connections to atleast 150000, if not 250000?

Secondly, I would like to know the hon. Minister as to when he is going to reconstitute the Telecom Advisory Committees which were constituted long back.

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Sir, I would like to state that target of 75000 given in the statement for Madras will be achieved by 31st March, 1997. Since demand of telephone connections in metropolitan cities remains more, it is always our effort also to extend facility of telephone connections more and more. He has asked about T.A.C. I would like to say that I have not yet gone through it but I have been told that Telephone Advisory Committees are already there but if they do not exist at certain places, he shall do so after this Session as suggested by hon'ble Members. We shall always respect their views.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : In Delhi, the waiting list is 9221 and the Government is promising to provide 250000 connections.

What is the sense in it? Are there mistakes in the figures? How is it that while the waiting list is for 9221 connections, the target is to provide 250000 connections?

Similar is the case of Mumbai. I do not know whether the figures are correct or not. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have allowed Shri Madhukar.

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all, let me congratulate the hon. Minister for taking certain decisions after holding the responsibility as the Minister of Communications.

Secondly, I would like to ask the hon. Minister to see the waiting list and the actual connections given. There is a vast difference. The number of connections awarded in 1996-97 have also been given. My question is regarding Mumbai. Since more than one year now, the Advisory Committee in existence in Mumbai. The Lok Sabha elections are already over, this has still not been formed. I would like to know when this will be formed.

Thirdly, after switching over the entire system of telephonic connection, yet we have been receiving complaints and because of cable faults and earthing problem, telephone connections have been disconnected. For a number of days the connections have not been restored. What remedy would the Government suggest in this regard? How the subscriber will get relieved out of this problem?

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: You have raised the question of constituting Advisory Committee. Since Session is going on, I do not to work in haste. We want to respect the views of our hon'ble Members who are on this Committee. I do not have any prejudice. I shall take all steps to streamline the working of my Department. At present waiting list of Bombay is 52717 and a target is to provide 2 lakhs and 50 thousand new connections by the end of this year. The waiting list will be completed but demand for new connections will be received again. Therefore, waiting list would always remain there. Even after providing 6 lakh new connection to these metropolitan cities, we shall be having a waiting list of nearly more than 1 lakh applicants. Let the list be longer. It is because of this reason that private sector participation was allowed. There is some delay in it. Had they started participation, the scheme of telephone on demand would have been implemented by the end of 1997... (Interruptions) You have asked for the steps taken to remove the faults of working of telephone connections.

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR : Cable fault and earthing problem are the two specific reasons.

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: I paid my attention towards this aspect immediately after taking over this portfolio and I had issued instructions that cable faults should be removed within 48 hours. New telephone connections would be installed in 15 days after issue of O.B. In case shifting pertains to the

same exchange, it will be done within 15 days. In so far as Bombay is concerned, the percentage of shifting in 7 days is 23, the percentage of installation of new connections in 15 days is 23, the percentage of removal of cable fault in 48 hours is 73. But I am not yet satisfied. I am going to issue fresh instruction to officials of the Department that compliance of my instructions should be ensured. I am thinking of making entry into the C.R. of the person concerned if he is found guilty of not following the aforesaid instructions. I am paying special attention to see that facilities being extended to the consumer should be increased. There should be no grievance and officers and staff of the Department should comply with the rules.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is large scale bungling in providing telephone connections and discrepancies in the Bills. Whenever a consumer files a complaint about the discrepancies in the Bills, officials do not pay sufficient attention. I, therefore, want to know whether Government would like to set up an Advisory Committee of hon'ble Members and the consumers who should look into the irregularities in installation of telephone connections and Bills. Whether Government would examine it and ensure that no irregularity is committed. Besides...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: One supplementary is enough.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR: I am giving suggestion.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Leave aside the suggestion. You have put your question.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR: Telephone system is worst in Bihar. The Government have not spent Rs. 7 crore and surrendered it. Average per capita telephone connection comes to .07 percent in Bihar whereas national average is 4. What is the reason therefor? I want to ask whether Government would give special attention to provide telephone facility in backward States and regions?

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Sir, the provision of constitution of Advisory Committees already exists in Bihar. This question pertains to Bihar. There is another question regarding Bihar in today's list...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR: Let that question be taken up alongwith this. Question No. 387 may be taken up alongwith this.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: I shall reply to the same when it will be taken up.

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister has stated in his reply that telephone connections will be given on demand by 1997. I would like to congratulate him...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: I have not said so.

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT: It is expected that telephone connection will be available on demand by 1997. I congratulate you for this. In these days telephone services have been deteriorated. Nagpur is a central city from where I have been elected. There is a population 20 lakh of that city. Incidents of breakdown of telephone services are very frequent there. The telephones remain dead for months together. The staff is arrogant. Even if you complain to the General Manager, his reply would be "You may do whatever you can". If an M.P. is treated like this, how the public at large would be treated? When we write a letter to you, we get this reply on the third day. That is why I admire you and congratulate you. I have written letters to the General Manager there but no reply has been received. If your staff behaves arrogantly then how can you provide better services. You should take action against guilty officers. I would like to know the effective steps being taken to streamline the telephone services? Please assure the House in this regard.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Sir, if the hon'ble Member has been treated like this, he should give me in writing. My top priority would be to maintain dignity of hon'ble Member of this august House. In case any officer of our Department would behave like this, I shall not hesitate in taking stern action against him and punish him.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister has just now mentioned the good work being done at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. I want to know whether any scheme is being launched to provide better telephone services in big cities of Maharashtra such as Nagpur, Pune and Aurangabad? First of all power was centralised. One had to approach Shri Sukh Ram if he has to take telephone connection. In case you want to get a telephone booth allotted to a handicapped boy, then you have to bribe somebody. Now he has to bear the burnt...*(Interruptions)* You have centralised your Department and consequently power have also been centralised. Do you propose to decentralise them now? Our colleague and older brother Purohitji has rightly pointed out that telephones remain dead for 10-15 days in our rural areas. In case we write a letter, we do not get any reply. I want to say that you should decentralise powers and delegate powers to them and ask them to behave properly with representatives of the people.

Second thing is that Government have placed 25 telephone connections at the disposal of M.Ps. but if we write a letter to give telephone connection to somebody, it takes one or two months in installation of that connection. I want to ask whether it is proposed to enhance the quota of M.Ps.? Many people approach us and say that number of 25 connections for the whole year is less. They say that since we are representatives of the people, we should be given 25 connections every month or 200-250 telephone connections per year. Is there any such scheme under consideration of the Government? Government should give an assurance.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down. You have put your question.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE: We don't mind, if you withdraw that privilege 500-1000 people approach us, how can we oblige them?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Let him give the answer.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as far as power decentralisation is concerned, United Front Government have withdrawn out of turn-quota of the Minister. My quota has also been withdrawn.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The quota of M.P. should also be withdrawn.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: The quota of M.P. will not be withdrawn. I can also M.P. your quota will remain in tact. There is nothing to bother. In so far the question of increasing the quota is concerned, we have to keep in view the capacity of our Department. When we have fixed our target to give telephone connection on demand, there will be no significance of out-of-turn system. When private sector would start participating, then we hope that telephone connection will be provided on demand and out-of-turn or quota system will automatically became meaningless.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE: When Shri Sukh Ram was at helm of affairs, a committee was set up which used to accept money for providing telephone connections, that committee should be disbanded.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please maintain decorum in the House.

[Translation]

DR. RAMVILAS VEDANTI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I have written several letters to hon'ble Minister and told him that S.T.D. facility is not available in Machhlishahr, which is my constituency and this matter is pending since years have passed but street tower could not be installed upto now. We have also written letters to the effect that Machhlishahr, constituency may be linked with Mugrabad Phulpur so that S.T.D. facility could be provided to them but we have not received any reply so far. I, therefore, want to know as to what Government propose to do in this connection.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Sir this question relates to metropolitan cities and he is asking about Machhlishahr. I myself belong to Uttar Pradesh but I am not aware what

Government propose to do there. I, therefore, cannot give answer to his question.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I find in the reply that in the case of Madras, the waiting list was 85,743, the telephone connections provided during the period 1995-96 were 60,348 and the waiting list as on 31st March, 1996 is 83,187. In the case of Delhi and Mumbai, they are far more than those of Calcutta and Madras.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the criteria for fixation of targets. Is it growth pattern or is it urbanisation or is it industrialisation?

Secondly, I would also like to know whether, after the revelation of major scandle relating to Sukh Ram dealings in telecom, the Government is trying to revise the targets; and lastly...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Only one supplementary is allowed.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I would like to know that after the reports that so many companies including the multinational companies have formed a cartel in the matter of price quoting in response to the tenders, whether the Government will have to revise and review the whole step taken by the previous Minister or not.

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Sir, this question has no relation to the main question, whatever. In so far as the allotment of new connections is concerned, targets have been fixed in accordance with the demand being made in a particular region and our target is that we shall meet the present demand by 31.7.1997. In so far as the 2nd question is concerned, I believe that activities of my Department will remain transparent and in view of this previous practice of finalisation of tenders by the Minister has been abandoned. Now the officers will finalise and Minister will simply exercise their control. Our business would be to control, to enquire into the matter and punish the guilty we should not intervene in any transaction. Therefore Telephone Advisory Committee would finalise it. I want to assure the House that I have full faith in officers of my Department. They are not less competent or less intelligent than any body else. We should not doubt the integrity of all the officers. I shall try my best to keep the activities of my Department transparent so that people may also realise the sincerity of an officers. I assure you that if you send me any Complaint on this subject, we shall take our decision in all earnest and even if you have any doubt about my working, I shall try to remove that doubt also...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He is not doubting your integrity.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: I shall leave politics. The way political personalities are being maligned, it is very sign for the democracy. Therefor, it should be our duty to see that political personalities should keep themselves clean. Because aim of freedom of our country, which was in the minds of freedom fighters and Mahatma Gandhi has become meaningless. Our effort would be to see that our democracy emerges before the word once again in the form of clean and healthy democracy...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAN': Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister has said that this question has been asked about metropolitan cities. But in case you would take care of big cities only then what would happen to villages about which you speak so often after drinking water time and again. What steps are being taken to provide telephone connections in the rural areas urgently?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is a linked question.

PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAN': This is a valid question because I belong to a village.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: The village always remains on our priority list but this question pertains to metropolitan cities and therefore cannot answer his question...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Choubey, please do not behave like this. Please sit down.

[English]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the question is of phenomenal expansion in the capacity of the telephone exchanges. Now here according to the reply given, I find that the Government is totally dependant on the coming up of private participation in providing these telecom facilities. The point that I have to make is that there is a technological revolution.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : It is not the point but it is the question that has to be asked.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : There is already a technological revolution and a lot of new technologies are coming forward to enable phenomenal expansion of capacities as far as telephone exchanges are concerned. For example, there is the remote control system through which a phenomenal expansion can come without much of investment. So the question is, whether the Government would study this technological revolution that is there in the world for the phenomenal expansion of the telecom facilities and whether that would be applied in our country in order to meet the growing demands?... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please let him answer the question. Have you not followed the question, he means to say that whether you would adopt modern technology and you will study it.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : There is regular study of modern technology in our Department and we are adopting also and expansion is also taking place on that basis but the demand of our country is...

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Remote control system can bring revolutionary changes, why are you not adopting it.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, after China, maximum expansion is taking place in India and modern technology is also being adopted. But the demand is also increasing side by side. We shall try our best to limit that demand.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I shall allow one more question and no further question will be allowed.

...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: We are following the remote control system also.

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA: Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, working list in respect of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Madras given in the statement is upto March 1995. On that basis only 20,167 telephone connections have been given during 1995-96. According to these figures there is deficiency of 30 thousand approximately. It has further been stated that the waiting list has further been increased by 10572 which means the number of waiting list would be more than 40 thousand. It has also been written therein that it is being contemplated to provide 2-1/2 lakh connections each to Delhi and Mumbai in 1996-97. It has further been stated that you have given 19709 connections to Mumbai upto July 1996. Now if you could give only 19709 connections out of 2-1/2 lakh, how many more connections would be given to Mumbai by the end of 1996. You have fixed the target of 2-1/2 lakh and I want to know that how many connections can be given by the end of 1996. Can you give any guarantee in this respect? This question is based on the figures given by you because figures of 1997 would be separate, how many connections would be given by the end of it?

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Sir, at present waiting list of Mumbai is 52717 upto 31.7.1996 and our target is to give 2-1/2 lakh connections by the end of this year.

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA: This is upto 1997.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: This is upto March, 1997. But demand would further increase beyond this waiting list. However at present waiting list is that of 52717 and we propose to instal 2-1/2 lakh connections.

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA: I want to clarify my point on the basis of figures given by you.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: Figures given in the statement are upto 31.3.96 and I am giving you figures upto 31.7.1996. You should be satisfied with this. We intend to give 2-1/2 lakh connections whereas the waiting list is that of nearly 52 thousand. What more do you want?

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA METHA: My question is that you have fixed the target of 2-1/2 lakh but actual number of connections being given is very less, so in how much time you will be able to achieve this target?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This question has consumed more than sufficient time.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: We shall the target by 31.7.1997.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister while replying to the question has stated that he would like to be clean in politics and transparency in his Department. I welcome these steps. In this context I would like to ask him whether he would like to constitute an expert committee to review all the tenders passed during the last 3 years keeping in view the charges levelled by the hon'ble Members about various scams detected in the recent past. It will prove sincerity of purpose in respect of cleanliness in politics in so far his Department is concerned. The Parliament would also know the factual position of transparency. This is what I want to know from the hon'ble Minister.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA: I have nothing to add to what I have already stated in respect of transparency... (Interruptions)...

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI : It has been revealed recently and that is why I have asked to review the cases of last three years. (Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : There is no question of past days, whichever case will be detected, no leniency would be shown.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This is enough.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI : A question mark has already been put in the recent past and that is why I have demanded review of cases passed during the past 3 years

so that we may go one step ahead of transparency. (Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Past cases are being reviewed and if some new cases would be detected, then no leniency would be shown whatsoever. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This question is very important. Many hon'ble Members are interested in it. It would be better if the matter is discussed in the form of Half-an-Hour Discussion. I shall now proceed to next question.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Sir, all our efforts have been proved futile.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No, not at all.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : I am speaking for the last 3/4 hour.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Next question also concerns your Department.

[English]

Loss in Department of Telecommunications

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*383. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI I.D. SWAMI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Department of Telecommunications has lost a potential revenue of Rs. 804 crore per annum as reported in "Hindustan Times" dated July 19, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent to which capacity utilisation of telephone exchanges dropped during each of the last three years;

(d) whether any study has been conducted to establish the reasons of the above loss and to meet the loss;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.