

has laid down any guidelines regarding the kind of programmes that would be allowed to be telecast. Secondly, the Hon'ble Minister has stated :

[English]

"Government intends to introduce a Bill in the Parliament which would seek to facilitate the broadcasting of such channels within the ambit of the proposed law..."

[Translation]

I would like to know the time by which this Bill would be presented and whether you can also tell us about the time by which this Bill will be passed and it would become an Act. Whether this Act is likely to come into force within six months or three months so that the telecast of such programmes is stopped.

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : So far as the code is concerned, a code is already in force for the programmes being telecast through Doordarshan. However, we have not been able to do anything in case of private channels as no legislation has been formulated in this regard. As regards presentation of Bill, the matter is already pending before the Cabinet. We'll try to present and pass both the Broadcasting Act and Prasar Bharti Bill in this session itself. After getting the approval of the Cabinet, I would like it to be discussed on various fora throughout the country because such a law is being enacted for the very first time in this country. We'll give it wide publicity through newspapers and Doordarshan. We are starting a programme 'Focus' from Monday onwards. People from all walks of life be it the Editor of a newspaper or a politician, should be invited to express their views in this programme.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like this Bill to be passed in the Parliament not simply by majority but by consensus of all the members. Thus, we are trying to include all the viewpoints in this Bill.

[English]

Telephone Facility to Rural Areas

*85. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to provide telephone facility in the rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof, state-wise;

(c) the target fixed to provide telephone facility to the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh during the next financial year and the time by which this target is likely to be achieved;

(d) the rate of call proposed to be charged in these rural areas and the rent likely to be paid by the villagers for new connections;

(e) whether the villagers are also proposed to be provided with STD facility; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Government has adopted a policy to provide one Public Telephone in each of the villages of the country.

(b) As on 31.12.1996, 2,32,473 villages have been provided with telephone facility. The State-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(c) A target of 23,000 village Public Telephones (VPTs) has been proposed for Uttar Pradesh during 1997-98.

(d) The details are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(e) and (f) The STD facilities can be provided on Village Public Telephones (VPTs) if there is a demand and technically feasible to provide the same. Normal telephone connections in villages can take STD facility, if the exchanges are having STD facility.

Statement-I

S.No.	Name of Circle	Total No. of villages with Telephone Facilities as on 31st December, 1996.
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	159
2.	Andhra Pradesh	19338
3.	Assam	9134
4.	Bihar	13505
5.	Gujarat	13368
6.	Haryana	6953
7.	Himachal Pradesh	4621
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	1844
9.	Karnataka	14877
10.	Kerala	1530
11.	Madhya Pradesh	28703
12.	Maharashtra	24538
13.	North-East	2600
14.	Orissa	13915
15.	Punjab	8647
16.	Rajasthan	14058
17.	Tamil Nadu	15095
18.	Uttar Pradesh	30654
19.	West Bengal	8740
20.	MTNL, Delhi	191
21.	Calcutta Telephones	3
Total		232473

Statement-II*Tariffs for Rural Subscribers*

Telephone Exchange	Ren- tal	No. of call allo- wed free of charge during two months	Rates of Bi-monthly rental and call Fee				
			Fee per call unit for calls in excess of those allowed free of units charges				
			From 251 to 450	From 451 to 500	From 501 to 1000	From 1001 to 2000	In excess 2000
	Rs.		Paise	Paise	Rs.	Rs.P	Rs.P
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Exchange systems of less than 1000 lines	100	250	60	80	1	1.25	1.40
2. Exchange systems of 1000 lines and above but below 30,000 lines	200	250	60	80	1	1.25	1.40
3. Exchange systems of 30,000 lines and above but below 1 lakh lines	275	250	60	80	1	1.25	1.40
4. Exchange systems of 1 lakh lines and above but below 3 lakh lines	360	250	60	80	1	1.25	1.40
5. Exchange systems of 3 lakh lines and above.	380	250	60	80	1	1.25	1.40

SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Minister has stated in his reply that Telecom policy has been adopted by the government to provide one public telephone facility to each and every village of the country and out of total 6,04,925 villages, this facility has been provided in 2,32,473 villages so far. However, the telephones remain out of order in more than two-third villages out of the villages having telephone connections. Whether the government is merely completing the formality of providing a connection in order to meet the target? I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister as to whether the Government has got any plan to improve the situation so that the telephones which are presently out of order are made functional and if so, the details thereof. Further, how these telephones are proposed to be made functional?

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA: All the telephones installed in villages are out of order.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : No, Sir. All the telephones are not out of order, however the position is not very good either in this regard. It is true that there were a number of faults in the telephones installed in villages earlier but we have rectified the faults and have made a number of telephones functional this year. We had launched a special drive in this regard and according to the information available with me, 70 per cent telephones are functioning properly but 30 per

cent telephones are still out of order...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, 90 per cent telephones are out of order.

SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the condition of the telephones installed in villages is very bad...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let him complete his reply first.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Let me complete my reply first...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI SANAT MEHTA : The way they reply, sometimes we feel that we are living in a fool's paradise.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I'll give a reply as per the information available with me. I won't reply beyond it. If you have any complaint pertaining to any state or any district, you may give it to me in writing. I am even prepared to order a vigilance enquiry or CBI enquiry or any other enquiry which may satisfy you...(*Interruptions*)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please sit down. Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I request you to please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please let him conclude. Yes, Mr. Varma, please complete your reply.

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : If both of us speak at the same time, nobody would be able to hear anything...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why don't you listen to him?

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please sit down. Let him complete.

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : I'll give you the official figures and not of my own...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You may say whatever you want to say.

(Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, what is the reply given by the Hon'ble Minister?... (Interruptions) The Hon'ble Minister states that he is getting this matter examined...(Interruptions)

[English]

'The matter is being looked into'.

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : You are misinterpreting my statement...(Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Such a reply is given...(Interruptions) Leave aside U.P. and talk about your Ministry instead...(Interruptions) The telephones are not functioning properly anywhere...(Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : I have in mind the interests of all the states including that of U.P. and Bihar...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please sit down. I would request you to sit down.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Specific complaints can be made only when some of the telephones are out of

order. However, in this case, all the telephones are out of order...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why don't you allow him to speak?

[Translation]

I think, you are not satisfied with the reply given by the Hon'ble Minister but please allow him to complete his reply.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Thereafter, we'll consider some other alternative.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, What I had stated earlier was that as per the information available with me, a drive was launched to make functional the telephones installed in rural areas. We are somewhat satisfied with the progress but the telephones installed in rural areas are not functioning properly. We agree with you to an extent and we have also made an effect to improve the situation...(Interruptions)

SHRI G.L. KANAUIA : I am not satisfied with your reply. I would like to know about the action taken so far...(Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : You are wasting the time of entire House. Let me complete my reply first. Thereafter, I'll reply to all the questions you may like to put. I have the information furnished by my department which I can communicate. As per the information...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please listen to him.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You may speak.

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : As per the information available with me, 70 per cent telephones have been made functional while 30 per cent telephones are still out of order...(Interruptions)

SHRI TASLIMUDDIN : Not a single telephone is functioning properly in Bihar...(Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : It could be possible...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have to be on my legs again and again. Please listen to me for a minute.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, when you say that 70 per cent or 80 per cent telephones have

been made functional, they get more excited. Please share some more information...(Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : We respect your sentiments. It is quite possible that the information furnished by the Department may be wrong...(Interruptions)

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Not a single telephone is functioning properly in rural areas...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHELAI SINGH : When our telephones continue to remain out of order in villages, one can well imagine the plight of common man...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I would like to thank Shri Brij Bhushan for having asked his question. However there does not seem to be any scope for putting even a single supplementary in view of the atmosphere prevalent here. Hence I leave this matter to be taken up during half an hour discussion.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : I would like to give an assurance...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now nothing is being heard in this din. Please leave it.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please sit down. This is not good.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this matter should be taken up under Rule 193 as Half-an-hour discussion will not suffice. A short duration discussion should be held on it.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am sorry gentlemen, I have already said that Half-an-hour discussion will be allowed on this. Somebody may give a notice to that effect. There shall be no discussion on this point now.

Railway Projects

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*86. LT. GENERAL SHRI PRAKASH MANI
TRIPATHI :
SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have sanctioned some new railway projects during the last 6 months;

(b) if so, the location-wise details thereof; and

(c) the estimated investment involved in each of these projects so far?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A statement is laid on the table of the Sabha.

Statement

(b) and (c) The projects which have been sanctioned by the Government (approved by CCEA)/sanctioned by Parliament during the last 6 months with their location and cost are as under :-

S.No.	Name of Project	State	Cost (Rs. in cr.)	Date of approval by CCEA
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Construction of 3rd line between Bilaspur and Urkura.	MP	151.53	approved by CCEA on 19.9.96
2.	Doubling of Titalagarh-Langigarh Rd.	Orissa	66.61	-do-
3.	Electrification of Bhubaneswer-Vishakhapatnam	Orissa	292.22	-do-
4.	Electification of Udhna-Jalgaon	Gujarat/ Maharashtra	124.39	-do-
5.	Conversion of Ajmer-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur.	Rajasthan	262.00	-do-
6.	Sakri-Hassanpur	Bihar		approved by CCEA on 25.9.96
7.	New line between Khagaria and Kusheswarthan	Bihar	78.22	approved by CCEA on 21.2.97
8.	New line between Bangalore-Hassan-Shravanbelagola	Karnataka	179.18	-do-