

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA : The Government spent crores of rupees on spreading the Radio Telephone system in the villages. But at that time the excessive telephone system expended in the country in the name of Pam Petroda. Wait-battery is used in Radio telephone system which slowly and slowly, gets discharged. Due to this, it stops functioning. Now that system is being replaced by the solar battery system. May I ask you to let us know the names of the places where this system of Radio Telephone has been set-up? What are the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to set up such telephone exchanges in these villages where waiting list has been prepared for providing connections to the consumers?

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : We are trying to achieve our target fixed for this year. Now we have introduced zero maintenance battery. Apart from this directions have been issued to achieve the target as soon as possible...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : O.K. Let us consume the whole time on only one point.

SHRI L. RAMANA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, In Andhra Pradesh, 86, small Exchanges have been damaged due to the ongoing militant activities. In this connection, I have also held meetings with the hon'ble Minister. The Minister did set up a Review Committee in this respect consisting the Chief General Manager of Andra Pradesh and Divisional Manager Telephone of my district. I want to know as to when these 86 small Exchanges are likely to start functioning alongwith the steps taken by the Government to provide telephone connection to the Sarpanch and local people?

[English]

AN HON. MEMBER : Sir, Members from Jammu and Kashmir and Andhra Pradesh should be heard.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please, listen to his reply.

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : It is a fact that much damage was done to the Telephone Exchanges by the terrorism. Elsewhere also, such complaints have been received, therefore, we have included M.Ps. also in our job and requested them to give report themselves. We will try our best that these are repaired at the earliest.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, one year back under West Bengal sub-Telecom circle, a 120-channel equipment was installed in my Constituency at Adra. Only six channels are working. The Telephone Exchange also is not working properly for the last three years. I am not getting any telephone either from Delhi or from my Constituency. May I know from the Minister whether he will take steps so that the 120-channel equipment, which was installed one year

back at Adra Exchange under West Bengal sub-Telecom Circle, starts functioning?

[Translation]

SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Shri Acharia ji is one of our most respectful members. I will issue directions to the concerned officers today itself to look into his complaints...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Half an hour has been spent on this question...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : I have not been called ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Much time has been spent on this question. Half an hour has been devoted on one question.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You may give it for Half an Hour Discussion. It will last for one hour on its own.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please maintain decorum.

Uplinking Facilities

*362. DR. M. JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether giving uplinking facilities on Indian soil to satellite television channels will help earn more foreign exchange and also increase employment potential;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the fee proposed to be levied on private channels for uplinking from Indian soil; and

(d) the steps taken to popularise the Doordarshan international channel?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (c) The issue of permitting uplinking facilities from Indian soil is related to the question of permitting private broadcasting from within the country. This and other related issues would be taken care of by the proposed broadcasting bill which is likely to be introduced during the current session of Parliament.

(d) Various measures such as increasing the telecast time, showing programmes/films including in regional languages for benefit of NRIs, live telecasting of events of national importance, publicising channel programmes and schedules etc. have been taken to increase the popularity of Doordarshan International. Further, our missions abroad have been asked to give wide publicity to the telecast schedules and also give

no-objection certificates to cable operators willing to downlink DD international channel for further distribution.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : If a channel has to uplink programmes from our country, it will have to invest money in India to produce the programmes which will mean more foreign investment and greater job opportunities. May I know from the Minister whether Doordarshan will seek the help of the Pan American Satellite Corporation to popularise Doordarshan International Channel?

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : So far as DD-3 and DD-International channels are concerned, a Bill is coming before the Parliament. Once that Bill is passed, we can definitely say something about it.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : There are a large number of NRIs, living in more than 50 countries, who watch the programmes of DD-International channel. I would like to know whether the Indian Embassies and High Commissions would be provided with fund to set up Dish Antennae to receive the beam from Pas-I and Pas-IV Satellites being used by the Doordarshan or has any request been made to Pan American Satellite Corporation to help in making the Dish Antennae available to those countries where there are a large number of NRIs.

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : In my reply itself I have said, so far as giving financial assistance to different Embassies is concerned, there is no such proposal with the Government. Of course, we are popularising it. We have increased the total duration of telecast to 18 hours. The fresh programmes will be telecast for 10 hours and the duration of repeat programmes has been increased to 8 hours. Once the programmes are popularised, the viewership will go up.

[Translation]

KUMARI UMA BHARATI : Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Sir, time and again it has been asked on the floor of the House as to what kind of programmes are being aired in India through Satellite Channels. In my view these programmes are misleading the youth of our country and playing with their future. They are eroding our cultural heritage. A kind of mental perversion is taking place among our youth. The hon'ble Minister has time and again said that he would initiate some action in this regard because right now we are not having any policy to control the satellite channels. May I, therefore, know from the hon'ble Minister whether any decision has been taken in this regard or this Government is on the verge of its collapse and is not in a position to take a decision. I want an answer to this question from the hon'ble Minister.

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : The very objective of our Prasar Bharati Bill is to put a check on all such programmes are against our culture, traditions and are being aired on Indian Soil. It was my heartiest desire to bring this Bill in this session itself — but certainly I will bring it in the next session.

KUMARI UMA BHARATI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am listening it for the last six months that it would be brought in, it would be brought in... (Interruptions) Programmes with vulgar scenes are being aired through satellite channels and ultimately, our Doordarshan has also started competing with these channels. Whether Satellite channels would come in the parametere of Doordarshan?

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : Yes.

[English]

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the question is linked with the uplinking facilities to the satellite channels. Is it not a fact that the Government, as a matter of their collective policy, made it clear to the sports fraternity of India that they can augment their resources, they can negotiate with any TV channels they like for getting financial support? The Government has invited the sports' bodies and told them that the Finance Ministry had made it categorically clear that they have no objection to it in view of the liberal economic policy. Based on that policy, while a number of sports' bodies including that of Football negotiated with the foreign TV channels to sell their products. In spite of the judgement of the Supreme Court, the uplinking facility was not given by Doordarshan with the result that the Indian population is deprived of watching the game and also to earn resources.

The production quality of our Doordarshan is so bad that even if we project the game, the sponsors do not come forward. Doordarshan never paid the money till before the foreign channels came. I negotiated the matter time and again. On the 24th of this month, Nehru Cup will be staged in Cochin. Now, the viewers are asking me whether they would be allowed to watch it and I cannot say anything to them.

In view of this, will the Government find a *via-media* so that the foreign TV channels can get the uplinking facilities? It is because the Government's policy is that they do not pay even a single penny to sports' bodies and they have to augment their own resources.

Will the Government ensure that the uplinking facilities to satellite channels not jeopardise the interest of the national security and also at the same time an arrangement between the foreign TV channels and Doordarshan be made so that Doordarshan could also exhibit the game at the same time to viewers in India? Otherwise, what is the point of running the sports' bodies?

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : That is what, in my first reply itself, I have clearly stated. We are keeping in view the judgement of the Supreme Court and also the commitment of the Government that in the next part of this Budget Session, we are going to bring the Broadcasting Law. In that law, we will deal with it. Whether it is down-linking or uplinking, all will be involved in that. Once the Bill comes before Parliament,

I think, the hon. Members will have more opportunities to speak. In the next part of this Budget Session, we are definitely, going to have this Bill.

[English]

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Mr. Minister, it is a matter pertaining to your office. We opposed this programme in the Ministry while you were sitting in Doordarshan. Now, he has joined the Star TV and is earning lakhs and lakhs of rupees. This is what is happening in India. You try to find out, who is doing it...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, my question is also there.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I will allow you. Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please allow him to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : The officer who was working in my office should have taken into account that I am heading this department. I do not want to comment on anyone. But I can say that right now we don't have a law in this respect. Now the Supreme Court has given a ruling that we have got no power over AIR service. BBC service is not available in Singapore. NEWS is not available in France. I am not saying anything against the judgement but if our country is capable of making a law in this regard then we will not allow anything in our territory which is against our culture...*(Interruptions)* Bill is before the Cabinet and would be brought in the House in the next session...*(Interruptions)*

KUMARI UMA BHARATI : This supplementary still remains. Whether they will remain in the power next time or not?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now let them speak one by one.

(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the matter pertaining to providing uplinking facilities to Indian Companies from Indian soil has been pending with the Government for the last so many years. In the absence of this facility, though we are earning foreign exchange on the one hand but on the other hand, our companies have to work hard by paying frequent trips to Masco and Singapore. In the absence of uplinking facility, they can air any dimmed programme from other countries. They are not governed by the laws of our land. This uplinking facility is given by the four departments — Home, Space, Telecommunications and I and B. The hon'ble Minister must be knowing that within 13 days of my short Tennure I had held the meeting of the officers of these four departments to materialize this decision. I had also held meetings with all companies and removed all the impediments which were likely to stall the process of taking a final decision.

Now they remain no more. Only the decision remains to be taken. I want to ask the hon'ble Minister that when all the formalities pertaining to this important decision can be disposed of within 13 days then why could not you do it in the last ten months during your present tenure? You are holding the charge of this office for the last ten months, why could not you do it? Why is it still pending? You have included this aspect in the Broadcasting Bill. There are so many lacunas in this Bill that it is not going to pass easily. This Bill will be referred to ten Standing Committee and it will take years in getting the same passed. Will you be pleased to state whether you propose to take a final decision for giving this uplinking facility to Indian companies and whether you will exclude it from the perview of Broadcasting Bill...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : Whenever I take decision, it is always a final decision. I never take an incomplete decision...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Is it your complete decision?...*(Interruptions)* You have kept it pending by including this aspect in the Bill. What is the answer to my question? You have been keeping it pending for the last ten months...*(Interruptions)*

KUMARI UMA BHARATI : You have to be serious here. Such non-serious answer to this question will not do. The Government should function seriously ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI A.C. JOS : May I compliment the Information and Broadcasting Ministry that they have made lot of progress in Doordarshan? We have got different channels also. But there is no separate channel for sports purpose alone. It is high time we should have a channel exclusively for sports purposes. The biggest Sports Mela is going to take place in Cochin from the last week of March till the middle of April. Only a very few days are left now. Now the Football Federation is negotiating with Star TV. With whichever TV they are negotiating, they are ready to telecast it, may I ask the hon. Minister whether Doordarshan will assure the House that this biggest Football Mela of this country will be telecast and that live telecast will be given by Doordarshan from Cochin?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Is it related to this question?

SHRI A.C. JOS : I have put the question.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I am sorry. It is not related to the original question.

SHRI A.C. JOS : The hon. Minister is ready to answer the question.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If he wants to reply, I have no objection.

[English]

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : I will have a discussion with Shri P.R. Dasmunsi. Of course, I was thinking to have meeting in my room. Even the Football Clubs or any Association in India must have this.

[Translation]

Because they pay comparatively more money but the viewers of star T.V. are only one percent whereas the viewership of Doordarshan is at least 29 crore. That is the facility of our country. If machinery is good enough and if somebody wants help for taking uplinking facility, we will try to give him...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You had your say. Let Shrimati Jayawantiben Mehta speak, now.

(Interruptions)

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, the ultimate victim is the football team...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Jos, you are a senior Member, please sit down.

(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Sir, Doordarshan does not allow the sports bodies to give this to any other channel.

[Translation]

You have created a situation in which mother does not give food and father does not allow begging.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, I am sorry to say that the hon. Minister is taking it lightly...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have already allowed Shrimati Jayawantiben Mehta.

(Interruptions)

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, I am asking this in the interest of the State of Kerala and the hon. Minister is not giving any assurance...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : I will call Shri Dasmunsi for a meeting...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, at the very beginning of this question, my sisters Uma Bharati, Sushma Swaraj and Munshiji made their respective submissions. Replying to their questions, the hon'ble Minister said that he would bring in the Bill in the next session. In reply to Question No. 366, the Minister has made two things clear. He has said that he would promote the cultural values of our society. In addition to these questions, I

want to ask further that when you bring the Bill, that will be discussed and passed at that time but leave it a side. I want to say that showing woman taking drinks, smoking cigarette and showing other similar things etc. on screen is against our culture.

So far as dignity and self-respect of women are concerned, you should issue orders that from today onwards those vulgar scener will not be shown. My another question, which is very much linked with his one, is that...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now it is sufficient, you can ask only one question you, please, let him give his reply.

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : My next question is also in this connection. In reply to this, he has said that a selection Committee has been set-up therefor.

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : What is your question?

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : My question is that whether you are going to issue orders for putting a ban on it today itself. The selection committee consists of only bureaucrats, so I would like to know whether you propose to include some social figures also in this committee.

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : It is very good suggestion, I will look into it.

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, he is taking it lightly. He should issue orders on such a serious issue.

New Reserves of Gold

363. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the mines alongwith the quantity and value of gold extracted therefrom during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 so far;

(b) the total reserves of gold in the country at present;

(c) the States where exploration of gold has been going on;

(d) whether new gold reserves have been located in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and some other States;

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

(f) the steps taken for proper exploration of gold?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.