

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3258
ANSWERED ON:14.08.2003
OBSERVATIONS OF TEAM ON CAS
PRAKASH V. PATIL

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

- (a) whether the Government have sent team to the four metro cities to assess the levels preparedness of the proposed Conditional Access System (CAS);
- (b) if so, the details of the observations of the team;
- (c) whether in some metros the team found that the consumers need more education on CAS; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps are proposed by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b): Officers of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have visited the metros of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai to assess the preparedness for CAS and have, inter-alia, observed that -

(i) the demand of STB at the first stage would be met by imports and procurement of STBs is in progress and more are in the process of being received.

(ii) training of local cable operators is in progress.

(iii) the indigenous industry has not yet geared itself to meet the demand.

(iv) some MSOs have already offered attractive introductory schemes of making available of STBs on installments/hire-purchase/rental basis and have declared that they would be able to show approx. 60 free-to-air channels within the maximum price of Rs. 72/- (plus taxes).

(c) & (d): It has been decided to implement the CAS in a phased zone-wise manner in the three metros of Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai and at one go in Chennai w.e.f. 1st September, 2003. The intervening period is being used to step up the preparedness, to educate the consumers and to closely monitor the procurement and availability of the STBs. Through the issue of an order on 29th July, 2003, an 'Implementation Committee' under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary in this Ministry, has also been constituted, with representatives of Broadcasters/MSOs, Cable Operators, etc. This will closely monitor, (i) availability of STBs and their readiness for installations; (ii) modalities of installation (including testing); (iii) upgradation of infrastructure and network for implementations of CAS and steps taken to protect the interests of the consumers; (iv) availability of full information in respect of pricing of channels and the amount that cable T.V. subscribers will have to pay; etc. The Ministry has also launched a multi-media publicity campaign through advertisements in all the leading dailies of the country, through electronic media and through advertisements. The period for duty reduction has been extended upto 30th September, 2003 so as to ensure availability of STBs at affordable prices.