

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:342

ANSWERED ON:19.08.2004

INTRODUCTION OF DIRECT TO HOME SERVICE

Panda Shri Prabodh;Singh Shri Uday

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

- (a) whether DD and some private broadcasters have urged the Government to clear the DTH project;
- (b) if so, the details and present status thereof;
- (c) the number of channels likely to be broadcast by DTH operators;
- (d) the impact thereof on the monopoly of the cable operators;
- (e) whether the subscribers would have to pay a monthly subscription for the service;
- (f) if so, the subscription and installation charges fixed for the service; and
- (g) the time by which this service is likely to be introduced?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) to (g): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (g) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.342 FOR 19TH AUGUST, 2004 ON INTRODUCTION OF D.T.H. SERVICE.

(a) to (g): Pursuant to the decision of the Government taken on 2nd November, 2000 to open up the DTH broadcasting service in India, detailed guidelines were issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on 15th March 2001, for obtaining licence for operating DTH broadcasting service in India. Of the four applications received so far, ASC Enterprises Ltd. has been granted licence on 16.9.2003. They have launched the service w.e.f. 2.10.2003. The other three applications, viz., M/s. Space T.V., Essel Shyam Communications Ltd. and Noida Software Technology Park Ltd. are under process.

The Government had approved Ku band transmission project of Doordarshan involving an investment of approximately Rs.164 crore. This project envisages distribution of 30 free-to-air channels i.e. 20 Doordarshan and 10 channels of private broadcasters, particularly, regional channels. In the initial phase, to encourage adoption of this new technology, as part of the pilot project covering Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal, Gujarat and North Eastern Region, the public institutions like Anganwadis, Schools, Public Health Centres, Panchayats, Youth Clubs, Co-operative Societies will be provided the Set Top Boxes (STBs) and dish antenna for receiving bouquet of 30 channels. Ten thousand full sets containing dish antenna, satellite receiving equipment excluding T.V. receiver would be provided free of cost to these institutions. The project is expected to be launched soon.

DTH and cable network service are two different modes of delivery of content. Both DTH and cable service can co-exist. The DTH is a new concept to India whereas it has been in operation abroad for several years. As far as the subscription rates and installation charges are concerned, they are fixed by the D.T.H. Licensee. However, as per the provisions of article 7.7 of the Terms and Conditions of the Licence Agreement, as set out in Schedule to Form-B of the Agreement, the Licensee shall adhere to any guidelines/regulations which may be laid down by the Licensor in the interest of the consumers, such as pricing of bouquet(s) or tier(s) of channels, etc. The subscribers of Doordarshan's Ku band project will not be required to pay any monthly subscription charges. Messrs. ASC Enterprises Ltd., is currently reported to be providing 78 channels in the DTH bouquet and proposes to include around 100 channels in future.