

SIXTEENTH REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(1999-2000)

(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND
BROADCASTING

*[Action taken by Government on the recommendations/observations
contained in Eighth Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha) of the Standing
Committee on Information Technology on "Doordarshan—Production
of Programmes in-house and by outside producers"]*

Presented to Lok Sabha on.....

Laid in Rajya Sabha on.....



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

November, 2000/Kartika, 1922 (Saka)

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE	(iii)
INTRODUCTION	(v)
CHAPTER I Report	1
CHAPTER II Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government	9
CHAPTER III Recommendations/Observations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of replies of the Government	31
CHAPTER IV Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government replies have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration	40
CHAPTER V Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government are of interim nature	49
APPENDICES	
I. Minutes of the Thirty-Third Sitting of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (1999-2000) held on 30.10.2000	51
II. Analysis of Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the Eighth Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Information Technology	54

COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(1999-2000)

Shri Somnath Chatterjee — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Ambareesha
3. Shri Mahendra Baitha
4. Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal
5. Prof. Dukha Bhagat
6. Shri Tara Chand Bhagora
7. Shri Nikhil Kumar Chaudhary
8. Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhary
9. Shri T. Govindan
10. Adv. Uttamrao Dhikale
11. Shri Jawahar Lal Jaiswal
12. Shri K. K. Kaliappan
13. Dr. C. Krishnan
14. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
15. Shri Simranjit Singh Mann
16. Shri G. Ram Mohan
17. Shri A. K. Moorthy
18. Shri Karia Munda
19. Shri K. Balrama Krishna Murthy
20. Shri Sheeshram Singh Ravi
21. Shri K. A. Sangtam
22. Shri Saroj Tufani
23. Sardar Buta Singh
24. Shri Chandra Vijay Singh
25. Rajkumari Ratna Singh

(iv)

26. Shri Vinay Kumar Sorake
27. Shrimati D.M. Vijaya Kumari
28. Shri Vinay Katiyar
29. Shri A. Krishnaswamy
30. Shri G. Ganga Reddy

Rajya Sabha

31. Dr. M. N. Das
32. Shri Balkavi Bairagi
33. Shri Shatrughan Sinha
34. Shri Narendra Mohan
35. Shri Balbir K. Punj
36. Dr. Y. Radhakrishna Murthy
37. Shri Munavvar Hasan
38. Shri P. N. Siva
39. Shri Kartar Singh Duggal
40. Miss Lata Mangeshkar
41. Shri R. N. Arya
42. Shri K. Rama Mohana Rao
43. Shrimati Kum Kum Rai
44. Dr. Dasari Narayana Rao
45. Shri Rajiv Shukla

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. A. K. Pandey — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri P. D. T. Achary — *Joint Secretary*
3. Shri S. K. Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*
4. Shri A. S. Chera — *Under Secretary*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on Information Technology (1999-2000) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on its behalf, present this Sixteenth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations of the Committee contained in its Eighth Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha) relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

2. The Eighth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 25 February, 1999 and was also laid in Rajya Sabha on the same day. The Government furnished Action Taken Notes on the recommendations contained in the Report on 14 March, 2000.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at its sitting held on 30 October, 2000.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the body of the Report.

5. An analysis of Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Eighth Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (Twelfth Lok Sabha) is given at Appendix II.

NEW DELHI;
November, 2000
Kartika, 1922 (Saka)

SOMNATH CHATTERJEE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (erstwhile Standing Committee on Communications) deals with the action taken by Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in its Eighth Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha) on "Doordarshan—production of Programmes in-house and by outside Producers" relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

2. The Eighth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 25 February, 1999 and was also laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha the same day. It contained 45 Observations/Recommendations.

3. Action taken notes in respect of all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report have been received and categorised as under:—

(i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government:—

Paragraph Nos:- 25, 27, 28, 42, 43, 63, 64, 66, 67, 69, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 111, 124, 136, 137, 138, 146, 147, 148, 152, 161, 162 and 163

Total-30

Chapter-II

(ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of the reply of the Government:—

Paragraph Nos:- 44, 65, 68, 70, 107, 109, 110, 123 and 129

Total-9

Chapter-III

(iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:—

Paragraph Nos:- 24, 26, 45, 114 and 160

Total-5

Chapter-IV

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies are of interim nature:—

Paragraph No:- 122

Total-1
Chapter-V

4. The Committee trusts that utmost importance would be given to the implementation of the recommendations accepted by the Government. In cases where it is not possible for the Government to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee indicating reasons for non-implementation. The Committee further desires that final Action Taken Notes on the recommendations contained in Chapter I and Action Taken Notes in respect of the recommendation contained in Chapter V of this Report should be furnished at an early date.

5. The Committee will now deal with action taken by Government on some of its recommendations/observations contained in its Eighth Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha).

Doordarshan Coverage and fund constraints

(Paragraph No. 24)

6. The Committee in its Eighth Report had observed that the coverage of Doordarshan in terms of population and area was 86 percent and 72 percent, respectively. A sum of Rs. 225 crore in the form of budgetary and plan support was required for covering the remaining parts of the country, especially the uncovered areas in the North-East. As that amount was not received by Prasar Bharati, the Committee had recommended Prasar Bharati to expedite formulation of a thorough and realistic Perspective Plan and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to persuade the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance to obtain the required allocation so that the remaining areas, mainly the North-East, are covered by Doordarshan.

7. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in its Action Taken Note, has stated that the areas which are still left uncovered are the areas of sparse population where proportionately more investment is required to bring such rural habitations within the range of terrestrial transmission. Within the resources available, Doordarshan has tried to

bring such areas also within the range of terrestrial transmission. It has further been stated that outlay of Rs. 500.44 crore for the Annual Plan 2000-2001 fixed by the Planning Commission does not reflect any enhancement in allocation to the Ministry. As a matter of fact, the increase of Rs. 100 crore in the Annual Plan outlay for Doordarshan is only for implementing the J&K Package approved by the Government in 1999.

8. The Committee is not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry in view of the fact that the required amount of Rs. 225 crore has neither been received by Prasar Bharati nor there has been enhancement in the Annual Plan Outlay for the Ministry to cover the uncovered areas by Doordarshan. It is also not clear whether any Perspective Plan has been prepared by Prasar Bharati for the purpose. It is matter of grave concern that Doordarshan signals are not effectively available in 28 percent of the geographical areas of the country which are not in the range of terrestrial transmitting Stations and in order to bring such areas which are mainly remote and rural, within the range of terrestrial transmission, a proportionately higher investment is required. In view of these facts, it is imperative that Doordarshan gets adequate budgetary and plan support, notwithstanding its revenue earning from commercials. Prasar Bharati and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should, therefore, emphatically pursue the matter with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance at the highest level, with realistic proposals, so that the required funds are allotted to enable Doordarshan to cover the uncovered areas, especially those in North-East.

Shortage of Cameramen

(Paragraph No. 26)

9. The Committee in its earlier Report was highly concerned to note the shortage of Cameramen Grades I, II and III, the shortfalls being 8,150 and 120 posts, respectively. Keeping in view the emerging competition from the technically superior private channels, the Committee had recommended that serious efforts should be made to optimally fill up the posts of cameramen in each grade.

10. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in its Action Taken Note has stated that at present there are 11 vacancies in Cameramen Grade I, 100 in Cameramen Grade-II and 86 in Cameramen Grade-III.

It has further been stated that as per the Government recruitment rules, the posts of Cameramen Grade II are to be filled up 100% by direct recruitment through UPSC. Because of the change in status of AIR and Doordarshan from Government Departments to autonomous bodies, UPSC is not entertaining proposals for filling up posts in these organisations. Therefore, all new recruitments and appointments in these organisations are to be done by Prasar Bharati as per their own service regulations and recruitment Boards which have been stated to be under finalisation. It has also stated that the phenomenon of some of Cameramen and other production staff leaving Doordarshan for better prospect elsewhere has not been a matter of concern either to Prasar Bharati or to the Ministry.

11. The Committee is seriously concerned to note the high shortfalls in almost all the Grades of Cameramen i.e. 11 in Grade I, 100 in Grade II and 86 in Grade-III. Percentage wise shortfall comes to 12 percent in Grade-I, 20 percent in Grade-II and 58 percent in Grade-III. The matter has become complicated after the autonomous status given to Doordarshan for which UPSC is not entertaining recruitment proposals. This complication has been compounded due to the delay on the part of Prasar Bharati in finalising the relevant service rules and regulations for recruitment boards etc. Moreover, the Committee is surprised to note that neither the Ministry nor the Prasar Bharati is concerned with the vacancies of Cameramen and other Production staff when almost 200 posts of Cameramen are lying vacant in the organisation out of 752 sanctioned posts. The Committee, therefore, is of the opinion that Prasar Bharati should expeditiously finalise the relevant service rules so that the vacant posts of Cameramen are filled up without further loss of time. In the meantime, the Ministry should find some alternative means for the early appointment of Cameramen, especially Grade-II till the service rules and regulations are finalised by Prasar Bharati.

Programmes Produced by Central Production Centre (CPC)

(Paragraph No. 45)

12. The Committee in its Eighth Report had expressed its concern that around 20 percent of the Programmes produced by Central Production Centre (CPC) had not been telecast at all and the rest were telecast at odd hours on revenue consideration. As the relegation of CPC programmes to unimportant time slots had become one of the dissuading factors of production of good in-house programmes, the Committee had recommended that efforts should be made to telecast CPC programmes at prime time or appropriate time.

13. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in its Action Taken Note has stated that Doordarshan can not afford to lose viewership to its competitors during prime time as nearly 80% of Doordarshan's revenue comes from prime time programmes. It has further been stated that the criteria whether a programme should be aired during prime time or not is to be determined by the programme theme and viewership it would attract. The source of its production i.e. whether produced by CPC or by outside producers may not be a determining factor. It has simultaneously been stated that three programmes produced by CPC are currently being telecast during prime time on DD-Metro.

14. The Committee is not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry for relegating the Central Production Centre (CPC) programmes to unimportant time slots. The statement that at present three CPC serials are being telecast at prime time on DD-Metro is a matter of little consolation in view of the fact that such programmes are not telecast during prime time on National Channel. The Committee believes that CPC which is envisaged as a Production Centre for producing programmes of excellence can produce quality programmes to attract sufficient viewership which in turn can generate handsome revenue, provided the CPC is properly equipped and encouraged to produce programmes of high quality. The apprehension of losing viewership to Private Competitors, in case of telecasting CPC Programmes during prime time, seems to be unfounded. The Committee, therefore, reiterates that the programmes produced by CPC should be accorded due recognition by telecasting the same during prime time or appropriate time so that the Centre is encouraged to produce more quality programmes in the interest of the viewers.

Undue extension to some Serials

(Paragraph No. 114)

15. The Committee had noted in its earlier Report that mindless extension to some Serials like 'Shanti', 'Swabhimann', 'Junoon', 'Chandrakanta' etc., had caused extreme boredom in the viewers, and therefore, the Committee recommended that the Ministry, Prasar Bharati as well as Doordarshan should recognise their public obligations and respect the viewers' sentiment.

16. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in its Action Taken Notes has stated that as per the present policy, extension to sponsored Serials is considered keeping in view various factors like quality of production, commercial earning and popularity as indicated by viewership and TRP rating vis-a-vis the up-to-date payment position of the serials. It has further been stated that if any serial is extended beyond 52 episodes, Doordarshan earns 50% extra telecast fee from that particular serial.

17. The reply of the Government is not satisfactory. Although, revenue is one of the important considerations, Doordarshan should keep in mind its objectives and social obligations towards its viewers. The statement that quality of production is taken into account, apart from revenue considerations while giving extension to some serials is not convincing because it is a common experience that quality invariably deteriorates and popularity declines when lengthy extensions are accorded to the serials, Such extensions often tend to destroy the artistic merit of the production by stretching the basic plot in an unnatural way apart from inviting charge of favoritism. The Committee, therefore, recommends that lengthy extension should not be granted to any serial purely on revenue considerations.

Complaints against corrupt practices

(Paragraph No. 160)

18. The Committee had noted in its Eighth Report that although there had been a plethora of complaints of corrupt practices in Doordarshan Kendra, as had been apprised to the Committee through numerous memoranda of general public, only eight of them had been registered with the vigilance section of the Doordarshan Directorate between August 1995 and July 1998. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the procedure, for registering complaints should be streamlined and simplified. The Committee also desired to be apprised of the details of complaints registered and the action taken against those found guilty.

19. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has replied that in order to streamline and simplify the procedure for registering the complaints, a systematic computerised list of complaints is being

maintained. The following statement has also been furnished citing the details of complaints registered and action taken thereon:—

Sl. No.	Date of complaint	Officer involved	Complaint	Present status
1	2	3	4	5
1.	9.4.1996	Ms. Jharna Das ASD	Allotment of programme to the son of Ms. Jharna Das	Action on preliminary enquiry report is under process.
2.	29.2.1996	Smt. Vimla Mittal, Director, DDK, Jaipur	(i) irregularities in selection of commissioned programmes (ii) appointment of technicians (iii) misuse of transport	Government's displeasure has been conveyed to Smt. Mittal, the then Director, DDK, Jaipur Preliminary enquiry conducted and allegations found baseless. Hence, the case has been closed Recovery from officer involved ordered.
3.	2.4.1996	Complaint received through CBI against DDK, Bhubaneswar	(i) appointments (ii) commissioning of programmes (iii) Engineering stores (iv) Transport	Irregularities in appointments are under examination. The issue of referring the matter to CBI is under process Government's displeasure has been conveyed to Shri R. Sekhar, AE and penalty of censure has been imposed on Shri B.C. Bohidar. The matter inquired into and nothing has been substantiated.
4.	3.9.1996	Shri Farooq Nazki, Director and Shri Bashir Badgami, EP	Malpractices and embezzlement	Case closed as the allegations were not specific.
5.	31.12.1996	Shri M.L. Kharoo, Production Assistant Shri Satish Dhar, Production Asstt.	Running of a private firm Acquired properties	Anonymous and pseudonymous complaint. Hence the case closed after taking action as per the provisions to deal with anonymous/pseudonymous complaints -do-

1	2	3	4	5
6.	19.5.1997	Shri Harish Awasthi, DDG	Irregularities in passing serials on Kashmir	Pseudonymous complaints. Case closed after taking action as per the provisions to deal with pseudonymous complaints
7.	17.9.1997	Names not specified	Irregularities in passing TV serials 'Shanti' and others.	Complainant did not allege anything specific against any officer. The preliminary enquiry conducted into the allegations did not reveal involvement of any official and allegations were found baseless. Hence, the case closed.
8.	17.12.1997	Names not specified	Irregularities regarding the TV serial 'Yug' and others.	Complainant did not allege anything specific against any officer. The preliminary enquiry conducted into the allegations did not reveal involvement of any official and allegations were found baseless. Hence, the case closed.

20. The Committee is dissatisfied with the reply of the Ministry in view of the fact that only eight complaints had been registered with the Directorate between August, 1995 and July, 1998. Mere maintenance of systematic computerised list of complaints will not be adequate to streamline and simplify the procedure of registering complaints/grievances. The whole procedure relating to registration of complaints/grievances needs to be reviewed. The Committee is also anguished to note from the above statement that in two cases although the complaints were registered as far back as in April, 1996, action on preliminary enquiry report is still under process and matters are under examination. The Committee deprecates the unusually longtime taken in such cases. The Ministry owes an explanation in this regard and the Committee wants to be apprised of the action taken in these cases. The Committee also notes from the same statement that some complaints, being anonymous and pseudonymous, have been closed as per the provisions dealing with such complaints. The Committee would like to be apprised of the procedure evolved to deal with anonymous/pseudonymous complaints.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 25)

The Committee notes the observation of the Secretary of Information and Boardcasting that it is not reasonable on the part of Prasar Bharati to expect that all the required funds will be available by way of one time payment or within a very short time and as such the Committee recommends that priorities and sequencing instead of overall requirements be accorded greater importance. Further side by side with expansion, augmentation of the existing facilities demand the attention. Therefore, along with planned expansion, Parsar Bharati should strive for better quality of their programmes and technology.

Reply of the Government

While formulating the proposals seeking allocation of funds, prioritization and sequencing is being done to the extent possible. Along with schemes of expansion of network, schemes for augmentation and modernization are taken up from time to time depending on availability of resources. Doordarshan is keeping a constant watch on the new emerging technologies in the field of broadcasting and adopting them depending on their suitability to Doordarshan network & availability of resources. It is the constant endeavour of Doordarshan to maintain high quality of programmes and services.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P1), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 27)

The Committee is deeply concerned to note that exodus of talented people from Doordarshan has assumed proportions over the years. Lack of freedom, poor promotional avenues, low morale etc. besides inadequate pay structure are stated to be the reasons behind such exodus. Although Doordarshan is extending some facilities to its cameramen and other staff, they seem to be grossly inadequate in

view of the number of posts, especially cameramen, that are lying vacant and the number of staff that has left the organization over the years. The CEO, Prasar Bharati's submission that exodus problem is unavoidable in any large organization is not convincing in view of the role assigned to Doordarshan. In this context, the statement of non-official witness that even basic facilities like a colour T.V. set or a telephone is not provided to a producer on the plea that he is not in the entitled category requires serious consideration. The Committee agrees that it is very difficult to match the salary structure of private organizations even after the implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission Recommendations. But Doordarshan should be able to provide some basic facilities as stated above. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommends that Doordarshan should bestow some respectability on its staff members by recognizing the fact that functional responsibilities should be taken into account rather than the hierarchical considerations in providing perquisite/amenities. Besides, granting functional freedom, encouragement, recognition and motivation through promotional avenues, merit certificates and awards/prizes, which will definitely not cost much, Doordarshan would be able to recruit and retain the talented staff. The Committee expect that Doordarshan, Prasar Bharati and the Ministry would take all necessary steps at an early date before it becomes too late.

Reply of the Government

Prasar Bharati has noted the suggestions for being followed up. Encouragement to talented staff by way of merit certificates, commendation letters etc. is being given.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P1), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 28)

The Committee is concerned to note that equipment in Doordarshan are old and require large scale replacement, although Prasar Bharati has purchased equipment worth Rs. 130 crore in 1997 and replaced 100 cameras, 70 Electronic News Gathering (ENG) equipment's and 39 VCRs which had become useless due to obsolescence. The Committee would like to stress that procurement and augmentation of equipment and production facilities should keep pace with the expansion of Doordarshan network, more so in view of the stiff challenge that is being faced from private channels.

Reply of the Government

Replacement of old equipments by new equipments and augmentation of facilities at Doordarshan Kendras is a continuous process and schemes in this regard are formulated and taken up for implementation every year depending on availability of resources. At present, a large number of schemes pertaining to replacement of old HPTs (13 No.) and a number of LPTs by new transmitters; replacement of old studio equipments (cameras, switchers, recorders); replacement of old air-conditioning plants/units; replacement of TVROs etc. are under implementation besides the schemes of augmentation and modernization of facilities at Doordarshan kendras.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P1), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 42)

The Committee is unhappy to note that there is an acute shortage of cameramen even in Central Production Centre which was set up in 1988 as the main Production Centre of Doordarshan for its in-house programmes. The Committee is further concerned to note that the cameras for CPC were purchased prior to 1987 and therefore, they are no more suitable but due to fund constraints the cameras could not be replaced. The Committee fails to understand how with an acute shortage of cameramen and without state-of-the-art cameras, CPC would be projected as a centre of excellence for in-house activities. In fact, these basic constraints have resulted in deterioration of Doordarshan's in-house programmes which has become more glaring after the advent of the technically superior private channels. The Committee, therefore, urges Doordarshan, Prasar Bharati and the Ministry to make concerted efforts to recruit adequate number of cameramen and acquire state-of-the-art cameras so that the purpose for which CPC was created is not defeated. The Committee would further like to recommend that, as has been pointed in some succeeding paragraphs, the experienced cameramen should be given some incentives in the shape of freedom, respectability, awards/prizes etc. so that they feel interested to join and remain in Doordarshan. Further by sponsoring some programmes produced by CPC, Doordarshan should be able to raise necessary funds for purchasing modern cameras.

Reply of the Government

The present vacancy position of Cameramen in CPC is as under:—

	Sanctioned	Filled	Vacant
Cameramen Grade-I	04	04	—
Cameramen Grade-II	18	14	4

Keeping in view the overall shortage of Cameramen in Doordarshan, the position of Cameramen in CPC, Delhi is much better. Efforts will be made to fill up the vacant posts. However, sufficient number of Cameramen have been posted at major kendras like Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Bangalore, Thiruvananthapuram etc.

Incentives have been provided to Cameramen by way of continuous and regular promotions. They are inducted under IBPS of Programme Production Cadre. Many of them are working as Director of Kendras in different capital stations and also as Controller of Programmes in Doordarshan Directorate heading different Sections. Thus, they are enjoying full freedom in production and administrative work. There are no cases of Cameramen leaving the Department for the past few years particularly after induction in IBPS and implementation of Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations. CCD (Digital) Cameras (18 no.) have also been provided at CPC, Delhi.

The effort of Doordarshan is to utilize the capacity of CPC to the fullest.

Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV.(Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 43)

The Committee is of the view that Doordarshan should constantly have state-of-the-art technology available to it as has to compete with private channels with technological superiority. In this context, the Committee would like Prasar Bharati to impress upon the Ministry for simplifying the procedures and tendering process so that state-of-the-art equipment could be purchased without any delay.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry agrees and fully accepts recommendation that Doordarshan and AIR should have state of the art equipments so that they can compete with private broadcasters and also that users can get good quality of services. The effort of the Prasar Bharati is to upgrade its equipments continuously.

The Ministry has looked at the procedure of purchases applicable to Prasar Bharati and it has no extra provision which may be contributing to delay in procurement of equipments. It is submitted that it is not possible to do away with the tendering process or the requirement for drawing up the tender documents and conditions in detail because purchase of any item with public funds necessarily requires transparency and objectivity. If any specific condition in tendering process is brought to notice which is found to be unnecessarily contributing to delays, that would be corrected by the Ministry. It is also submitted that from 1st April, 2000 the grant to Prasar Bharati would be on lump sum basis and consequent to this, financial autonomy to Prasar Bharati will increase. Therefore, any delay which might be accruing because of the earlier need to secure concurrence of the Ministry for purchase above the specified amount would now be eliminated.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 63)

The Committee is seriously concerned that the role of Doordarshan as a public broadcaster has been reduced gradually from the sake of raising revenue. There is an apparent conflict between attaining the objectives on one hand and raising resources on the other notwithstanding the statement of DG the Doordarshan as a public broadcaster always keeps in mind its aims and objectives and seventy per cent of programmes on National Network are information and education oriented. The Committee is of the opinion that there is a need to balance the role of Doordarshan as a public broadcaster and revenue earner. Indiscriminate emphasis on revenue generation disregarding its role of public broadcaster would certainly affect attaining its objectives. The Committee recommends that a balance should be maintained to play its role as the major public broadcaster, consistent with the necessity of raising adequate resources without affecting the quality of the programmes.

Reply of the Government

The Government fully agrees with the observations of the Committee. The factual position in respect of various categories of programmes telecast by Doordarshan are as follows:—

(I) NATIONAL

Programme under sponsored, commissioned, royalty and in-house, procured from private producers and in-house resources are beamed from Delhi through satellite and over 1000 terrestrial transmitters for 24 hours a day. The transmission includes programmes on education, environment, health and family welfare, industry, specific audience *viz.* senior citizens, women, children, disabled, industrial workers, youth and sports in addition to entertainment programmes telecast at prime time. On National Network programmes are telecast in Hindi and English languages. Lok Seva Sanchar Parishad Programmes/Messages are also telecast four to five times a day.

(II) REGIONAL

Transmission for regional network is beamed from all capital stations in the country except Haryana. The composition of programmes at regional level includes programmes on agriculture, health and hygienic environment, consumer awareness, youth, children, senior citizens, women handicapped and legal hints etc. In addition, the regional kendras also telecast drama, serials, music and dance programmes and a few film based programmes in entertainment slot in regional language of the State concerned.

(III) LOCAL

The local transmission for a duration of 30 minutes to one hour duration from over almost a dozen TV stations in the country primarily telecast programmes on agriculture and health & hygiene for the benefit of the viewers of the concerned area in the local language/dialects of the State concerned.

Distribution of programmes on the above three types of services in the broad categories of Education, Information and Entertainment is as follows:-

Percentage of Programmes

Type of Programmes	National	Regional	Local
Education	23	33	50
Information	35	36	40
Entertainment	42	31	10

Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 64)

The Committee notes that the Ministry in the discussion on Annual Plan 1997-98 very strongly projected before the Planning Commission that the entire revenues of Doordarshan and AIR should come to them for their own developmental projects. The Committee appreciates this effort of the Ministry and would like to be apprised of the decision of the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance in this regard. The Committee would simultaneously like the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to further pursue the matter with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance in future plan discussions also.

Reply of the Government

A decision has since been taken with the concurrence of Ministry of Finance to switch over from the existing system of Government budget for Doordarshan and AIR to a new system which will be effective from 1-4-2000. As per this system, all the receipts will be retained by Prasar Bharati and additional funds will be made available to them through grants-in-aid and loans.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.03.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 66)

The Committee is glad to note that after the inception of Prasar Bharati, visual content of Doordarshan news has improved to a great extent with 80 per cent visuals. The Committee would like Prasar Bharati to maintain and improve the standard so that the percentage and quality of visual clippings shown in Doordarshan news comes upto the standards of other competing channels.

Reply of the Government

Doordarshan thankfully acknowledges the pleasure of the Committee regarding improvement of visual contents in News. A 24-hour News & Current Affairs channel has since been opened keeping the Committee's suggestion in mind. Quality of visual clippings has also been improved in Doordarshan news since then.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.03.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 67)

The Committee notes that Doordarshan does not have any correspondents posted abroad although All India Radio has got correspondents in six/seven countries. Taking into consideration the Prasar Bharati's submission that it is an expensive proposition to have TV correspondents in other countries, the Committee would like Prasar Bharati to consider whether the Akashwani correspondents could be usefully utilized for the purpose.

Reply of the Government

The suggestion made by the Committee to utilise the services of the existing correspondents of Akashwani posted abroad by Doordarshan usefully, has been accepted by Prasar Bharati and they are being redesignated as Prasar Bharati Special Correspondents.

Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 69)

The Committee is happy to observe that after the formation of Prasar Bharati, for the first time, three/four serials are being produced in-house with a view to giving much needed motivation and recognition to the Doordarshan's own producers. The Committee would like Prasar Bharati to encourage more production of in-house serials.

Reply of the Government

It is heartening to note the appreciation of the Committee regarding encouragement given to in-house productions. Doordarshan will continue to encourage in-house productions.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph Nos. 100 & 101)

The Committee notes that the Panel of 400 Producers which was earlier in vogue for approval of the commissioned programmes was scrapped by Prasar Bharati because the system of having Panel of Producers had a lot of loopholes for malpractices, favouritism, patronage etc. resulting in non-receipt of programmes and non-recovery of money from the defaulting producers. The Committee is surprised over the fact that over so many years Doordarshan persisted with panel of producers which ultimately resulted in malpractices creeping into the system. The panel should have been scrapped much earlier. However, now that it has been scrapped and the responsibility has been entrusted with the Doordarshan Directorate and the Regional Kendras to identify, approach and assign programmes to competent producers besides deciding the subject/theme, the Committee desires that fresh norms/procedure for enlistment of producers should be laid down and the Committee be apprised of the same. The Committee hopes that talent and expertise would replace favouritism and patronage in the award of commissioned programmes.

As regards the monitoring system, to check malpractices in the award of Commissioned programmes to outside producers, the Committee has been informed of Programme Advisory Committee at each Kendra to advise the Director of the concerned Kendra regarding selection of programmes. Further at the Directorate level DDGs, and the DG meet on regular basis in two kinds of meetings *i.e.* Short Listing Committee and the Costing Committee. But keeping in view the public complaints and the evidence tendered before it that there are hundreds of instances where programmes were awarded to outside producers without consulting the Committees constituted by Doordarshan, the Committee is inclined to conclude that the arrangements made for checking malpractices in the award of Commissioned programmes are utterly insufficient, to say the least. The Committee, therefore, recommends that norms/guidelines established for awarding programmes to outside producers should not be flouted under any circumstances or under pressure from any quarter. Committees constituted for selection of programmes should be invariably consulted and unanimous approval be taken before awarding any programme. The overall monitoring system be strengthened and accountability and responsibility be fixed. It is high time that programmes are assigned to really talented people so that Doordarshan is immunized from the charges of corruption and viewers get high-quality programmes.

Reply of the Government

By and large commissioning of programmes is done on the basis of talent and expertise with some space for newcomers such as FTII and NSD graduates etc. Currently no empanelment has been done.

Fresh norms of commissioning of programmes have been drawn up. New guidelines have been formulated for commissioned programmes with a view to streamline the procedure of commissioning of programmes. A copy of the same is enclosed at Annexure-I. These guidelines have been circulated for strict compliance by all officers of Doordarshan.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

ANNEXURE I

No. 1/20/99-PI
Prasar Bharati
(Broadcasting Corporation of India)

New Delhi: 5th October, 1999

OFFICE ORDER

The policy and procedure regarding Doordarshan's programme commissioning has been under review for some time. It has been decided to revise the procedures after a thorough review keeping in view the present requirements of Doordarshan. In suppression of all previous guidelines, the procedure for commissioning programmes will now be as under:—

- (i) All pending proposals (In DD-1 and DD-2) for commissioning should be returned to producers to enable them to offer the same to other channels.
- (ii) Future commissioning decisions for DD-1 and DD-2 will be restricted to channel requirements, projected by Channel Director in terms of major gaps in programming FPCs *i.e.* in respect of programme genres which were absent from the Channel.
- (iii) No future commissioning decisions on DD-1 and DD-2 should be based on plain concept papers submitted by producers since they give no idea of the Producer's technical competence and also no assurance of production values. Commissioning proposals submitted by producers must be accompanied by at least 4 pilot episodes.
- (iv) No advance payments to be made by Doordarshan to producers. Payments to be made only after screening of each episode.
- (v) All shooting should be recorded in Betacam format and Beta Cassettes to be submitted for the raw footage and final or mixed footage, without which no screening will be permissible and without screening no payments will be made.

- (vi) Commissioning will be permissible on new channels, e.g. DD- Sports, DD-News, DD-Prime Channels or for special festivals/occasions on national and regional Channels. This will have to be with prior concurrence of CEO. Efforts should be that commissioning contracts should not be for more than 3 months at a time and should be encouraged to transit into sponsored programmes within 6-12 months.
- (vii) Special Audience Programmes/Public Service Broadcasting related programmes commissioned by other Ministries will be exempted from these restrictions.

2. The revised guidelines are circulated to all concerned for strict compliance.

Sd/-

(Rajeeva Ratna Shah)

CEO.

5.10.1999.

To

1. DG (CD)/ADG (N&CA)/ADG (A)/All DDGs.
2. All Programme Officers in DG:DD
3. All Programme Sections in DG:DD
4. Controller of Sales.

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 102)

The Committee appreciates the fact that Prasar Bharati is giving special emphasis to young and talented producers like fresh graduates from National School of Drama (NSD) and Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) in the award of Commissioned programmes. Besides these young producers, programmes are also assigned to reputed and top class producers with a view to having programmes of top quality. Hence, the Committee would like Prasar Bharati to maintain a healthy balance in the award of Commissioned programmes to these two groups.

Reply of the Government

This is already being done and will be continued in future also.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P1), dated 14.03.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 103)

The Committee further recommends that alongwith the fresh graduates from reputed Institutes, retired Doordarshan Professionals having proper credentials as Writers, Directors and Producers should also considered for award of Commissioned programme.

Reply of the Government

This is already in practice.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P1), dated 14.03.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 104)

The Committee is surprised to note that no fresh talent was assigned any programme on the occasion of the celebration of India's 50th year of Independence although Rs. 1 crore each was allotted to five top class producers *i.e.* Shyam Benegal, Girish Karnad, Buddhadev Das Gupta, Gautam Ghosh and Bhupen Hazarika. The Committee feels that alongwith these top class producers, some fresh producers should have been given some assignment on the occasion as their talent is to be nurtured. The Committee would therefore like Doordarshan, Prasar Bharati and the Ministry to keep it in mind for further assignments.

Reply of the Government

Other producers, based on their qualifications and experience, were also offered chances to produce the programmes and they did produce programmes on the 50th Anniversary of India's Independence keeping in view the suitability of their proposals and programme requirement of Doordarshan. However, the recommendation of the Committee has been noted.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P1), dated 14.03.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 105)

The Committee notes that no infrastructure facilities are made available to outside producers under the Commissioned programme scheme. The non-official witness was also not in favour of allowing the outside producers to use Doordarshan's infrastructural facilities for various reasons like inordinate delay on the part of outside producers to complete the assigned task, lack of proper understanding of work culture amongst the outside producers on one hand and Doordarshan Professionals on the other and also emergency use of studios for V.I.Ps' interviews, statements etc. But the Committee feels that with proper planning and arrangements Doordarshan's infrastructural facilities can be made available to genuine and needy outside producers especially the first timers. In this context the Committee recommends that the feasibility of allowing the outside producers to use Doordarshan infrastructure be explored so that there is optimum and judicious use of both infrastructure and money.

Reply of the Government

With the substantial increase in the duration of regional language satellite channels, studios and other facilities of Doordarshan are likely to be fully utilized for in-house production. However, the suggestion of the Committee has been noted to optimize the use of Doordarshan infrastructure facilities. These can be considered for renting out to the outside producers on fixed fee/charges, if not required for Doordarshan's own use.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.03.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 106)

The Committee feels that the measures taken by Doordarshan in blacklisting and initiating legal action against the Producers who fail to submit/complete the programmes in time assigned to them is a step in right direction and should be strictly followed in all such cases. Besides the aforesaid measures, all other steps possible should be taken to recover the money with interest from the defaulting Producers.

Reply of the Government

The suggestion of the Committee has been noted and Doordarshan will continue its vigorous efforts to ensure completion of commissioned programmes and recovery of advances from defaulting producers.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 108)

In this context, the Committee is happy to note Prasar Bharati's modifications of the guidelines for sponsored programmes which are applicable to both reputed Producers and to the young graduates from NSD and FTIL. Both the categories are given priority and are not required to deposit the processing fee or go through the other rigmarole. Needless to mention, it is a judicious modification and the Committee would like to stress that whenever any modifications are contemplated, it should be done in such a way that it protects the interest of both the reputed and fresh producers.

Reply of the Government

The recommendation of the Committee has been noted.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 111)

The Committee is unhappy to find that normally there are no sponsors for the programmes produced by Central Production Centre (CPC) as the sponsors come only for entertainment programmes in larger measure than for public broadcast programmes. The Committee is of the view that in order to motivate the in-house Producers as well as other technical staff Doordarshan should make all out efforts to find sponsors for CPC programmes. In this context, the Committee would like to cite the example of "Surabhi", which was high in Doordarshan's popularity chart despite being a completely informative and educative programme. Therefore, more programmes like "Surabhi" should be produced in-house and got sponsored so that Doordarshan's own producers and staff are able to get public recognition and encouragement to come out with more creative and quality programmes.

Reply of the Government

All out efforts are being made by Prasar Bharati to produce quality in-house programmes and to find sponsors for them.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 124)

The Committee further recommends that Doordarshan should ensure the quality of its cassettes also to improve the quality of picture on T.V. Prasar Bharati's import of a large quantity of cassettes and their supply to different Doordarshan Kendras is a step in right direction.

Reply of the Government

Cassettes conforming to international standards (CCIR Specifications) are being procured by Doordarshan. All efforts are made to evaluate the technical quality of cassettes before procuring them and the cassettes are procured from manufacturers of repute.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 136)

The Committee is perturbed to note the public complaints that scripts submitted by lesser known but meritorious producers are being pirated/stolen in connivance with Doordarshan officials. The Additional Secretary's submission that it is very difficult to check script piracy and the DG's statement that Doordarshan does not come into picture whenever there is a dispute between two parties over script piracy are matters of grave concern. The position however, seems to have improved to some extent after the inception of Prasar Bharati as genuine complaints of script piracy are enquired into by the Deputy Director General in-charge and the person who steals is disqualified. The Committee feels that with proper preventive measures it will not be difficult to check script piracy. Doordarshan should not remain a silent spectator to the dispute between two parties on the plea that it is indemnified as per the agreements. The Committee would also like the authorities to explore the feasibility of entrusting enquiry related to this matter to an independent agency so that impartial investigation is carried out in case any insider is involved in such piracy/theft.

Reply of the Government

The suggestion of the Committee has been noted for compliance. As and when such doubts about the rights of the script etc. are raised, the concerned parties are requested to send necessary proof/documents in support of their claim.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 137)

The Committee notes that the way the scripts/tapes are received and stored, requires improvement, as admitted by the DG, Doordarshan. It feels that with meticulous storage of scripts/tapes the chances of script piracy can be greatly reduced. The Committee, therefore, recommends that necessary arrangements be made to store the scripts properly and securely.

Reply of the Government

Suggestion of the Committee has been noted for compliance.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 138)

The Committee is surprised to note that after the receipt and acknowledgement of a proposal it takes three months to two years to process and finalise the same depending upon the availability of the time slot. In the opinion of the Committee, there should be a reasonable time limit for processing and finalizing each proposal received and acknowledged thereafter. The Committee recommends that the matter be looked into with urgency and the producer be informed one way or the other within a fixed time period, say two months after his proposal is received and acknowledged. This way, the Committee feels, the producer would have no complaints against unusual delay in processing his proposal. Moreover, the sooner the proposals are finalized the lesser is the chance of piracy.

Reply of the Government

Various steps have been taken by Doordarshan to avoid delay in processing and finalising of both commissioned and sponsored programmes. Since commissioning has virtually been stopped for

DD-1 and DD-2, the unsolicited proposals for these channels, which are received suo moto, are returned without much loss of time. So far as sponsored programmes are concerned, it takes time from the time of approving a concept to the time when a programme is finally accepted or rejected as it goes through various stages of processing. However, efforts are made to take a decision on all proposals received either way in course of four months from the date of receipt of the proposal.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 146)

The Committee is unhappy to note that due to larger number of proposals for programmes, it has become very difficult for Doordarshan Directorate to keep record of them. The Committee also note that the proposals which come by post or through Minister's office are not acknowledged in every case. This state of affairs substantiates the public allegations that the records of the proposal submitted by the producers are neither maintained properly nor acknowledged duly. The Committee is, therefore, of the view that Doordarshan Directorate should maintain the basic office etiquettes in acknowledging and recording each and every proposal, notwithstanding their numbers. As assured to it during evidence, the Committee would like Doordarshan to urgently streamline the procedure and introduce computer terminal at the reception itself through which the producer would be able to know the position of his proposal. The Committee is of the opinion that with technological break-through it is not an uphill task to acknowledge and record various proposals received. Moreover, unless and until the proposals are properly recorded and acknowledged, Doordarshan is bound to invite criticism from public.

Reply of the Government

Instructions have been issued to all sections dealing with such proposals to acknowledge and maintain a record of proposals received. Efforts are being made to computerise the whole system in the next financial year which will facilitate quick acknowledgment and monitoring of such cases.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 147)

The Committee also recommends that Doordarshan Directorate should advise the Regional Kendras to strengthen their respective programmes for replies to viewers' letters containing useful suggestions in the light of public grievances.

Reply of the Government

The Regional Kendras have been advised to include viewers' letters containing useful suggestions in light of public grievances.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 148)

The Committee further recommends that incentive of giving prizes to the best viewer's view as introduced by Calcutta Doordarshan Kendra be extended to other prominent Regional Kendras also so that viewers are encouraged to send more valuable suggestions for overall qualitative improvement of programmes.

Reply of the Government

In the programme of viewers forum where viewers' letters are discussed, various kendras have been inviting persons who write meaningful letters of suggestions and criticism. Kendras have also been advised to follow Calcutta Doordarshan's Prize Scheme.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 152)

The Committee observes that the scheme for awarding prizes to Production and Engineering staff introduced in early eighties was later on given up as it was hardly implemented. Subsequently, the Ministry felt the need to revive the scheme in order to motivate the people working in Doordarshan. However, despite the Additional Secretary's assurance during evidence that the scheme would be revived in 1997, it is found from information furnished to the Committee in mid-1998 that the scheme is yet to be revived. Taking into consideration the fact that recognition of talent in one way or another is the best motivation for the people working in any organisations, the Committee recommends to the Ministry to revive the Award scheme without further loss of time.

Reply of the Government

A new scheme for awarding Prizes to Programmes, Engineering and Administration staff is at its final stage and would be implemented in the next financial year.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 161)

The Committee further recommends that Prasar Bharati should bring it to the notice of public that persons having any complaint/grievance against DD officials could lodge the same without fear or hesitation. As assured by the CEO during evidence, the Committee hopes that a notification to this effect would soon be issued and brought to the notice of the public.

Reply of the Government

A notice board has been placed at reception displaying the names of CVO and Vigilance Officer along with addresses and telephone numbers for lodging complaints. A complaint box is also placed at reception to encourage the public to lodge their complaints. Similar action has also been taken by all Doordarshan Kendras and Maintenance Centres.

In compliance of the suggestion given by the Committee, Prasar Bharati has also released an announcement to the press on 02-03-2000. Announcement is also being made on DD-1 and DD-Metro channels. The complaints regarding corruption against Doordarshan officials may be lodged by with Chief Executive Officer and Dy. Director General (Finance & Vigilance) in Prasar Bharati and Joint Secretary and Chief Vigilance Officer in Ministry of I&B.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 162)

The Committee is glad to note that in order to eliminate acceptance of sub-standard programmes, Prasar Bharati is trying its best to ignore pressure, recommendations etc. by protecting their officers from outside interference and instilling confidence in them. While commending these measures, the Committee recommends that apart from complaints of outside interference, inside manipulation and corruption is also to be looked into seriously so that malpractices resulting in the telecast of sub-standard programmes are eliminated.

Reply of the Government

Following measures have been taken in this direction:—

Orders streamlining the procedure of commissioned programmes has already been issued by Prasar Bharati. Presently, commissioning of programmes for DD-1 and DD-2 has been restricted to channel requirements, projected by the channel director in terms of major gaps in programming FPC (Fixed Point Chart).

CEO in consultation with DDGs of DD-1 and DD-Metro Channels, Commercial and Finance has reviewed the commercial rate cards of DD-1 and DD-Metro. The collection of revenue including sponsorship fee is monitored periodically.

The selection of all major sponsored programmes is being made by a committee of DDGs of DD-1 and DD-Metro Channels, Commercial & Sports and Finance or jointly through circulation.

Based on the transfer policy administration is rotating the employees after every 4 years and also following vigilance wing's suggestion to transfer tainted officials from the sensitive posts.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 163)

The Committee notes that to minimize corrupt practices, Prasar Bharati has been taking a number of steps viz. scrapping the panel of 400 producers, notifying that no paper in the organization be marked as confidential, interacting with the producers and general public etc. But the Committee is hardly convinced that with these measures alone, the Prasar Bharati would be able to eliminate corruption from the organization as claimed by the CEO, Prasar Bharati during evidence. Undoubtedly, there has been some improvement after the inception of Prasar Bharati but to eliminate corruption from an organization which has been under its way over so many years persistently gigantic efforts are needed. The Committee, therefore, recommends that besides resorting to the above mentioned measures, Prasar Bharati should sincerely chalk out appropriate and periodical plans and strategies so that the purpose of Prasar Bharati is well served.

Reply of the Government

Following steps are being taken by Prasar Bharati in this regard:—

- (i) The Vigilance Unit in Doordarshan has been strengthened. Officers and staff of proven integrity and proper aptitude for handling such type of work have been posted for vigilance work.
- (ii) Preventive vigilance machinery has been strengthened in the organisation. All the instructions prescribed by Central Vigilance Commission are being strictly followed to ensure rotation of officers and staff from sensitive posts and vice versa after a fixed tenure.
- (iii) Administration Wing is consulting the Vigilance Officer before effecting any placement/transfer of staff from one post to another, especially to sensitive areas. Officers with doubtful integrity and against whom several complaints were received, have been immediately transferred. A special review will be taken up every year to study this aspect and a report will be submitted to CVO for necessary action.
- (iv) In order to facilitate the people to make complaint against corrupt officials, a notice board containing the name of Vigilance Officers, their address and telephone numbers has been displayed at the reception of Doordarshan Bhawan and all Kendras/DMC and other office complexes have been asked to take similar measures.
- (v) The guidelines/procedures issued by Doordarshan *viz.* procurement of equipment, tenders, rate card, sponsored and commissioned programmes etc. will be scrutinized and any loop holes which pay the way for corruption will be rectified. Revised guidelines for commissioned programmes have been issued and programmes on royalty have been also been discouraged. The commercial rate card of DD-1 and DD-Metro is reviewed and amended from time to time as required, in consultation with DDGs of DD-1 and DD-Metro channels, commercial and finance wings. The selection of all major sponsored programmes are being made by a committee of DDGs of DD-1 and DD-2 channels, commercial and sports and finance or jointly through circulation.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV(P.I), dated 14.3.2000]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 44)

The Committee observes that the budget for CPC was Rs. 1.10 crore for the year 1996-97 out of which a substantial amount of money was consumed by the artists for their TA, DA and hotel bills. The Committee further notes that the concept of centralized programming in Delhi was adopted as the equipments were in Delhi and the CPC was set up at a cost of Rs. 45 crores. However, the Committee does not agree with the concept of centralized programming in the two studios of CPC at Delhi and feels that if the facilities available at other Regional Kendras are used for producing CPC programmes, the Ministry would be able to make saving out of the meager budget provided to CPC. The Committee, therefore, recommends that other Regional Kendras should be put to use for producing CPC programmes, for the sake of economy as well.

Reply of the Government

Central Production Centre and Regional Kendras are periodically requested to send their contribution for telecast on National Network DD-1 and Metro. Accordingly about 10% of the total transmission time at National Network (DD-1 and DD-2) is filled up with programmes contributed by CPC and the various Regional Kendras.

It may, however, be mentioned that facilities at CPC are geared primarily to meet the requirement of National programmes/channels whereas studios at regional kendras are to service their respective regional programmes/channels.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P.I), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 65)

The Committee notes that there was an attempt by Doordarshan to recruit News correspondents and some persons were recruited. But the scheme did not succeed, as there was no promotional avenues and Doordarshan also did not intend to build up the cadre of News correspondents. The Committee fails to understand why Doordarshan is reluctant to build up a cadre of News correspondents more so in view of the fact that private producers are no more engaged by Doordarshan to produce news programmes. In such a situation the News correspondents appointed by Doordarshan to produce news can effectively play the role. The Committee would, therefore, like Doordarshan to consider the revival of the scheme so that news programmes of Doordarshan are lively and current as in the private channels.

Reply of the Government

There is no proposal to revive the scheme of recruiting News correspondents on regular staff strength of Doordarshan. In a dynamic and highly competitive media environment it is necessary to have a flexibility to engage people on need base rather than build up a regular cadre. It is difficult to provide promotional opportunities and compensation package comparable to market for regular staff in creative areas such as news reporting which breeds frustration and lack of motivation in the long run. However, Doordarshan is taking all measures to ensure that its news programmes are as lively and current as those of private channels. For this purpose, young officers of Indian Information Service are being trained and used for news reporting. Casual Reporters are also being engaged as and when required. New anchors of repute have also been engaged on contract basis. Specialists from various fields are invited to discuss and debate issues with anchors. The facility of hot switching between Delhi and Studios located in other parts of the country is also being provided to give the news programme a national look.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (P.I), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 68)

The Committee notes that although there has been some decline in the quality of in-house programmes owing to the increasing emphasis on the procurement of sponsored programmes, after the formation of Prasar Bharati, Doordarshan in-house producers are being encouraged through monetary awards and commendation certificate to produce quality programmes. The Committee commends the steps taken by Prasar Bharati to encourage the in-house producers to come up with quality programmes. However in the Committee's view these measures are not enough to achieve excellence in in-house production. The Committee would like Prasar Bharati to impart specialized training to the talented in-house producers so that the in-house programmes of Doordarshan are qualitatively of a high order. Further, as discussed in succeeding paragraphs, Doordarshan has to allot some prime time slots to the in-house programmes even at the cost of losing some revenue.

Reply of the Government

Training courses are being periodically arranged for in-house producers to update their knowledge in production and also they are encouraged to produce quality programmes for scheduling on National Network.

Subsequent to the last meeting of the Standing Committee, Training Courses/Work Shops were organized in collaboration with Foreign Organisations like BBC, Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, Thomson Foundation, ABU, AIBD etc. This is a continuous exercise. Considering the competition from other channels, only those programmes which have large viewership are generally slotted during prime time.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 70)

The Committee appreciates the fact that after the inception of Prasar Bharati, timing of the regional language programme has been increased by five hours. Besides, Prasar Bharati is reviewing the Regional language programmes, encouraging and giving them more funds. The Committee considers these steps to be in the right direction and would like Prasar Bharati to continue to encourage and support the development of regional language programmes. Perhaps Prasar Bharati may consider increasing the duration of the Sanskrit language programme, if feasible.

Reply of the Government

Eleven Doordarshan Kendras namely Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bhubaneshwar, Calcutta, Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jalandhar, Mumbai, Srinagar, Thiruvananthapuram have been telecasting programmes in the Regional languages on satellite. These services were earlier called Regional Language Satellite Services and now called Regional Language Satellite Channels (RLSC). A plan of action is being initiated to reformat RLSC programmes so that more and more time could be devoted in dissemination of information, education and entertainment in regional languages. Recently duration of telecast of RLSC has been increased in the following languages/kendras:-

Kendra	Language	Duration	Date
Bangalore	Kannada	24 hours	1-1-2000
Calcutta	Bangla	24 hours	1-1-2000
Chennai	Tamil	24 hours	1-1-2000
Hyderabad	Telugu	24 hours	1-1-2000
Thiruvanthapuram	Malayalam	24 hours	1-1-2000
*Srinagar includes	Kashmiri	14 hours & 30 minutes	27-1-200 *This transmission
for Kashmir channel.			
Mumbai	Marathi	16 hours	1-1-2000

There are plans to increase the duration of RLSC in respect of the following kendras/languages:-

Ahmedabad	Gujarati	24 hours	1-4-2000
Mumbai	Marathi	24 hours	1-4-2000
Jalandhar	Punjabi	4 hours (Mon-Sat.) 6 hours (Sunday)	15-3-2000
Guwahati		14 hours & 30 minutes	15-4-2000

Doordarshan is also planning to launch 24 hours Regional Language Satellite Channels (RLSC) in respect of Patna, Lucknow, Bhopal and Jaipur in the next financial year.

It is not feasible, at present, to increase the duration of Sanskrit programmes.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 107)

The Committee notes that as per the guidelines the Commissioned Programmes should not be changed to sponsored category. But flouting these guidelines some Commissioned Programmes like 'Sankalp', 'Gul Gulshan Gulfam', 'Tenalirama', 'Inkar' etc. have been changed to sponsored category. The DG's explanation regarding change of Commissioned Programmes into sponsored programme is not satisfactory in view of his own statement that basically the Producers are taking advantage of the Government money in making a serial popular and getting it sponsored later on. Further, the DG's reply that the guidelines are valid in so far as Doordarshan is prepared to commission the required number of episodes on a given subject creates confusion. The Committee feels that guidelines should be uniformly made applicable to all and for all circumstances. When these guidelines are violated, it is bound to raise criticism. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the guidelines prescribed for commissioned and sponsored programmes should in no case be flouted for any one, irrespective of stature of the producers, so that allegations of corruption and favouritism are kept at bay in the best interest of the Organisation.

Reply of the Government

Commissioning of programmes is done to supplement the programme requirement of Doordarshan and topics for commissioned programmes are selected with a view to meet the objectives of Doordarshan as a public broadcaster. The revenue earning potential of commissioned programmes is less in comparison to the entertainment programmes telecast under sponsored category, as the commissioned programmes are produced on topics of serious nature.

However, budget constraints don't allow commissioning of programmes for indefinite period. When a programme commissioned initially becomes popular and establishes itself, Doordarshan tries to transfer it to sponsored category if it still suits programme requirement of Doordarshan. In this way, Doordarshan earns revenue through sponsorship fee without bearing the production cost when it is converted to sponsored category.

However, to ensure optimal utilisation of funds and to minimise malpractices, guidelines for commissioned programmes have been revised which *inter alia* provide that commissioning will be in exceptional cases only on specific requirement and efforts will be made to transfer them into sponsored programmes within 6-12 months.

[Ministry of I&B's, Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 109)

The Committee has been informed that Producers of sponsored programmes are prepared to wait for a long period for their programmes to be telecast and that too without knowing or caring for the time slot. As a matter of fact, the sponsored programmes have outpaced the other category of programmes and become so attractive that Producers, without knowing at what time their programmes would come on the air, are prepared to wait for years together. The Committee is, however, unhappy over the submission of DG, Doordarshan that any Producer who gives minimum guarantee and promises more revenue could jump the queue. The Committee feels that this clause is against the interest of fresh producers who would not be in a position to meet the demands of Doordarshan unlike the reputed producers. The Committee, therefore recommends that the mentioned clause be suitably modified keeping in view the plight of fresh aspirants of sponsored programmes.

Reply of the Government

There are large number of aspirants including fresh ones awaiting time slots for sponsored programmes. The programmes are considered for slotting keeping in view Doordarshan's programme and commercial requirements. While preference is given to programmes of new genres and novel concepts, some popular genres get slotted when a certain amount of MG is offered to Doordarshan by the Producer. However, in the recent past some fresh programmes such as 'Beta' 'Abhimaan' 'Fugitive—the most wanted' and 'Sargam' have been accepted and slotted for telecast.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 110)

The Committee notes that in-house productions were envisaged at a time when channels were very few and only a few sponsored programmes were anticipated. Further, the budget for in-house programmes has also a bearing on the number of such programmes that could be produced so far as Commissioned programmes are concerned. The Committee finds little consolation in the DG's submission that even after the advent of sponsored programmes they are consciously trying their best to increase the number of commissioned programmes in view of CEO, Prasar Bharati's admission elsewhere that a large number of Commissioned Programmes are lying in cans. It implies that the in-house programmes as well as the Commissioned Programmes have suffered a tremendous set back due to the advent of the sponsored programmes and Doordarshan's extra emphasis on earning revenue. Keeping in mind the fact that sponsored programmes are most entertainment programmes whereas in-house and commissioned programmes are informative and educative programmes, the Committee would like to stress that the importance and significance of in-house and commissioned programmes over the viewers should in no case be lost sight of or minimized. If Doordarshan neglects these programmes it would be doing a great disservice to the society as a whole and the younger generation in particular.

Reply of the Government

Most of the commissioned programmes have been telecast. Several commissioned serials have so far been successfully marketed and telecast with sponsorship. There are only 16 (Sixteen) numbers of programmes which are yet to be telecast. In future, the requirement of commissioned programmes on Doordarshan channels are to be ascertained and met as per the procedure laid down in the guidelines enclosed at Annexure-I.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 123)

The Committee notes that Prasar Bharati has discontinued an earlier system of gauging the loss of Doordarshan viewers to private channels through cable operators as that system of study was biased against Doordarshan and operated with vested interests covering only four Metropolitan cities. In its place, Prasar Bharati is trying to introduce a new system which would cover about twenty-four cities. The Committee would like Prasar Bharati to expedite the matter so that timely corrective action is taken in case the study points out loss of viewers. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

Reply of the Government

Prasar Bharati has not discontinued any system of gauging the viewership for Doordarshan or any other TV channels. A market research agency—Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB)—was collecting information on viewership to different channels through diaries maintained by a number of people in different cities. This organization has discontinued this system in the recent years.

A TV Audience Measurement System at the National level through People Meters has been contemplated in collaboration with different channels. This system, at present, covers only a limited number of towns where the level of cable penetration is very high. Doordarshan wants this system to be extended to a large number of towns so that a comprehensive picture of the viewership could be available for all. Doordarshan is in contact with different agencies working in this area. The two agencies TAM and INTAM having People Meter based system have made presentation to Prasar Bharati in December, 1999 and it has been decided to evaluate the performance of the two systems for three months and based on the evaluation, decision will be taken.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.03.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 129)

The Committee notes that Doordarshan Audience Research Television Ratings (DART), evaluates quality and popularity of programmes on the basis of feed back received from the production centres and viewers. But all these methods, although useful sometimes serve little purpose unless and until there is a scientific mechanism to

evaluate the performance of Doordarshan programmes. This kind of scientific mechanism is not there, as admitted by the CEO, Prasar Bharati during evidence. The Committee feels that although Doordarshan's Audience Research Section has professional manpower who have specialized knowledge in research analysis, it would be prudent to entrust the job to any outside body. The Committee therefore, recommends that Doordarshan should consider entering into an agreement with important reputed Market Research Organisation to provide ratings based on Electronic Meters, which could provide feedback on audience reaction and popularity of the programmes in a more scientific, without of course dismantling its Audience Research Section.

Reply of the Government

This has been explained in para 2 of the reply in respect of Para No. 123.

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.03.2000]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 24)

The Committee notes that the coverage of Doordarshan in terms of population and area is 86 per cent and 72 per cent respectively. The Committee further notes that Prasar Bharati's revenue earning through the Commercials would remain only a fraction of their requirements. The budgetary and plan support will have to continue in order to enable them to cover the remaining areas. The exact amount of money required and asked for by Prasar Bharati for coverage of remaining parts of the country—mainly the North-East where most of the States are under covered would be Rs. 225 crores. But this amount has not yet been received by Prasar Bharati. However, the Committee notes as has been observed by the Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting that funds would be made available during the coming year's Annual Plan or by possible revision in the Ninth Plan based upon Prasar Bharati's Perspective Plan. The Committee would, therefore, like Prasar Bharati to expedite formulation of a through and realistic Perspective Plan and place it before the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, who in turn should persuade the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance to obtain the necessary allocation so that the remaining areas, especially in the North-East, are covered by Doordarshan.

Reply of the Government

Bringing all the area and the population of the country within the reach of Doordarshan telecast remains the objective of Doordarshan. It may be mentioned here that because of relay of signals from satellite, the Doordarshan signals can be received by everybody, anywhere in the country if the person has the means in the form of dish antenna to receive satellite signals. However, because of the cost of dish antenna comparatively few individuals install it and more commonly cable

operators install the dish antenna and distribute the signals to consumers. In rural areas there are very few cable operators and, therefore, rural areas which are not in the range of terrestrial transmitting stations of Doordarshan, its signal is effectively not available. It may be noted that for many years now practically all urban habitations have been brought in the range of terrestrial Doordarshan transmitters. The areas which are still left uncovered are the areas of sparse population where proportionately more investment is required to bring such rural habitations within the range of terrestrial transmission. Within the resources available Doordarshan tries to bring such areas also within the range of terrestrial transmission. However, Ministry has been able to make a notable improvement in extending terrestrial coverage in J&K which so far has only 91.70% population covered by terrestrial signals. The government has approved a package of expansion programme which will bring 95% of J&K population under terrestrial signals within two years period. The programme is already under implementation.

The concern of the Standing Committee has been communicated to Planning Commission. Outlay of Rs. 500.44 crores for the Annual Plan 2000-2001 fixed by the Planning Commission, however, does not reflect enhancement in allocation to the Ministry. The increase of Rs. 100 crores in the Annual Plan outlay for Doordarshan is only for implementing the J&K package approved by the Government in 1999.

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 8 of Chapter I)

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 26)

The Committee is surprised to note that on the side of programming there has been shortage of staff to the extent of 40 per cent. The shortage is more serious in case of cameramen Grades I, II and III where there are shortfalls of 8, 150 and 120 posts respectively. Although Doordarshan had taken permission from the Government to recruit cameramen Grade III locally at Kendra level, the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission to revive a dying cadre called "Lighting Assistants" at the cost of the abolition of cameramen Grade III posts has posed a problem for recruitment of these cameramen. However, the Committee has noted the submission of DG, Doordarshan that once the Pay Commission Report is implemented,

they would forward their representation and appeal to appropriate bodies. Now that the Pay Commission Report has been implemented, the Committee would like to stress upon Doordarshan, Prasar Bharati and the Ministry to break the impasse regarding the recruitment and continuance of cameramen Grade III. Further, serious efforts should be made to recruit other categories of cameramen and programme staff who are the backbone of the whole network. The Committee feels that if these posts are not optimally filled up, Doordarshan would not be able to do justice to its viewers, besides meeting the competition from the technically much superior private channels.

Reply of the Government

The present position of Cameramen in various categories in Doordarshan is as under:-

	Sanctioned	Filled	Vacant
Cameramen Grade-I	93	82	11
Cameramen Grade-II	509	409 (*)	100
Cameramen Grade-III	150	64	86

(*) This includes 29 *ad-hoc* Cameramen

Since Doordarshan and AIR have been brought under autonomous statutory corporation namely, Prasar Bharati, all new recruitments and appointments in these organizations are to be done by Prasar Bharati as per their own service regulations and recruitment boards. Relevant service rules and regulations for recruitment boards etc. are in the process of being finalized. It may be pointed out that because of the change in status of AIR and Doordarshan from Government Departments to autonomous bodies, UPSC is not entertaining recruitment proposals for posts in these organisations. As per the Government recruitment rules, the posts of Cameramen Grade II are to be filled up 100% by direct recruitment through UPSC.

It is submitted that in many professions in the Government where outside market in the country is buoyant, the salaries in non-Government sectors are generally always much higher. Government in all these cases cannot match the salaries available in the non-Government sector. Therefore, in all these sectors and this applies to cameramen and other production staff of Doordarshan, some people

will continue to leave Government due to attraction of higher pay outside. However, a large majority of people prefer to stay with Government organizations because of the prestige of the Government employment, the security of Government service and dignified working environment. The Ministry feels and Prasar Bharti shares this perception that number of people leaving Prasar Bharati is not much and this phenomenon is not a matter of concern.

The recommendation of the Fifth Pay Commission to revive the dying cadre of Lighting Assistant has not been accepted by the Government and as such, this issue does not pose any problem in the recruitment of Cameramen Grade III. Local Kendras have been authorized to recruit Cameramen Grade III to meet their immediate requirement.

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 11 of Chapter I)

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 45)

The Committee is surprised to note that around 20 per cent of the programmes produced by CPC have not been telecast and that the rest are telecast at very odd hours due to the fact that some ongoing programmes/serials are being telecast at prime time to increase the revenue earning. The DG, Doordarshan, admitted that CPC Programmes get relegated to un-important time slots. This has become one of the dissuading factors for the production of good in-house programmes. Keeping CPC programmes as a programme Bank for emergent situations, as submitted by DG Doordarshan, does not serve the objective as CPC was originally envisaged as a Production Centre of excellence. Similarly, the Secretary's view that even if CPC programmes are not shown exactly at Prime time, those who want to see them would definitely see, seems to be a little far-fetched. The Committee, therefore, impresses upon both Doordarshan and the Ministry the need to make all out efforts to see that these programmes are telecast at prime time or appropriate time.

Reply of the Government

Retention of large viewership which translates into commercial revenue is the prime criteria for slotting programmes during prime time. Doordarshan cannot afford to lose viewership to its competitors during prime time. It may be mentioned that nearly 80% of the Doordarshan's revenue comes from prime time programmes. Therefore, the criteria whether a programme should be aired during prime time or not is to be determined by the programme theme and viewership it would attract. The source of its production i.e. whether produced by CPC or from outside producers may not be a determining factor.

However, suitable CPC programmes are telecast on DD-Metro during prime time if sponsored programmes are not available. CPC serials 'Savera' and 'Chakachak Home' are currently being telecast at 8.00 p.m. on Saturdays and 8.30 p.m. on Sundays respectively. Another CPC produced series titled 'Davat' (Cookery Show) is also being telecast in the afternoon at 1.30 p.m. between Mondays and Fridays for the benefit of female audience.

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 14 of Chapter I)

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 114)

The Committee is extremely unhappy to note that the Planning Commission's instruction to increase internal generation of revenue instead of relying upon budgetary support has compelled Doordarshan to grant lengthy extension to some serials like 'Shanti' 'Swabhimaan' 'Junoon' 'Chandrakanta' etc. In this context the Committee also notes that for the telecast of the serial 'Shanti', Doordarshan earns a revenue of Rs. 50,000/- to Rs. 1,00,000/- per day and for 'Swabhimaan' Rs. 3 lakh per day. The Committee appreciates that Doordarshan is in need to funds and it is very difficult to overlook the amount of revenue, Doordarshan is fetching from some serials as mentioned above. But the social cost at which Doordarshan is earning these revenue is immensely astonishing. The Committee does not intend to cast aspersion on the credibility of the Producers of those serials. But mindless extension of these serials has caused extreme boredom in the viewers because the original storyline of these serials has been distorted and the theme deviated. The Committee, therefore, feels that it is high time the Ministry, Prasar Bharati and Doordarshan recognize their public obligations and respect the viewers' sentiments. They should think twice before giving unnecessarily lengthy extension to any serial on revenue considerations.

Reply of the Government

Prasar Bharati tries to strike a balance between the need of maximizing telecast of socially relevant programmes which are not always commercially popular and the need to maximize entertainment programmes for which sponsorship is readily available and which fetch handsome income to Prasar Bharati. As per present policy, extension to sponsored serials is considered keeping in view various factors like quality of production, commercial earning and popularity as indicated by viewership and TRP rating *vis-a-vis* the up-to-date payment position of the serial. If any serial is extended beyond 52 episodes, Doordarshan earns 50% extra telecast fee from that particular serial. In each and every case the prior approval of the competent authority as prescribed from time to time is obtained.

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 17 of Chapter I)

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (Pl), dated 14.3.2000]

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 160)

The Committee is anguished to note that there is a plethora of complaints of corrupt practices in Doordarshan Kendra. But surprisingly, only eight of them have been registered between August, 1995 and July, 1998 with the Vigilance Section of Doordarshan Directorate. Moreover, from the information furnished by Prasar Bharati in this regard, it would be seen that certain cases of complaint have been closed without assigning any reasons whatsoever. In some cases names of the officials who have allegedly committed irregularities in passing TV serials 'Shanti' and 'Yug' have not been specified. In one case *i.e.* allotment of programmes to one's own kith and kin, action taken has not been indicated. Again, in certain cases, matter is under investigation of the Ministry or reports are awaited from the concerned DDKs. As an impression has been given that this information has been prepared hurriedly, the Committee would like Prasar Bharati to expeditiously apprise the Committee of the required details and the action taken against those found guilty. Taking into account the fact that only eight complaints have been registered in a period of three

years, the Committee is inclined to believe that the system of registering complaints with the vigilance section is complicated and cumbersome. The Committee, therefore, impresses upon Prasar Bharati and the Ministry to streamline and simplify the procedure of registering complaints so that malpractices and irregularities resorted to by the Doordarshan officials are curbed.

Reply of the Government

The latest status report in respect of specific cases referred by the Committee is attached at Annexure-II.

In order to streamline and simplify the procedure for registering the complaints, a systematic computerised list of complaints is being maintained.

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 20 of Chapter I)

[Ministry of I&B's Ref. No. 901/1/95-TV (PI), dated 14.03.2000]

ANNEXURE II

PRESENT POSITION OF THE CASES MENTIONED IN
RECOMMENDATION NO. 160

S. N.	Date of complaint	Officer involved	Complaint	Present status
1	2	3	4	5
1.	9-4-1996	Ms. Jharna Das, ASD	Allotment of programme to the son of Ms. Jharna Das.	Action on preliminary enquiry report is under process.
2.	29-2-1996	Smt. Vimla Mittal, Director, DDK, Jaipur	(i) irregularities in selection of commissioned programmes (ii) appointment of technicians (iii) misuse of transport	Government's displeasure has been conveyed to Smt. Mittal, the then Director, DDK, Jaipur. Preliminary enquiry conducted and allegations found baseless. Hence, the case has been closed. Recovery from officer involved ordered.
3.	2-4-1996	Complaint received through CBI against DDK, Bhubaneswar	(i) appointments (ii) commissioning of programmes (iii) Engineering stores (iv) Transport	Irregularities in appointments are under examination. The issue of referring the matter to CBI is under process. Government's displeasure has been conveyed to Shri R. Sekhar, AE and penalty of censure has been imposed on Shri B.C. Bohidar. The matter enquired into and nothing has been substantiated.
4.	3-9-1996	Shri Farooq Nazki, Director and Shri Bashir Badgami, EP	Malpractices and embezzlement in DDK, Srinagar	Case closed as the allegations were not specific.

1	2	3	4	5
5.	31-12-1996	Shri M.L. Kharoo, Production Assistant	Running of a private firm	Anonymous and pseudonymous complaint. Hence the case closed after taking action as per the provisions to deal with anonymous/pseudonymous complaints.
		Shri Satish Dhar, Production Asstt.	Acquired properties	-do-
6.	19-5-1997	Shri Harish Awasthi, DDG	Irregularities in passing serials on Kashmir	Pseudonymous complaints. Case closed after taking action as per the provisions to deal with pseudonymous complaints.
7.	17-9-1997	Names not specified	Irregularities in passing TV serials 'Shanti' and others.	Complainant did not alleged anything specific against any officer. The preliminary enquiry conducted into the allegations did not reveal involvement of any official and allegations were found baseless. Hence, the case closed.
8.	17-12-1997	Names not specified	Irregularities regarding the TV serial 'Yug' and others.	Complainant did not alleged anything specific against any officer. The preliminary enquiry conducted into the allegations did not reveal involvement of any official and allegations were found baseless. Hence, the case closed.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATION/OBSERVATION IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT ARE OF INTERIM NATURE

Recommendation (Paragraph No. 122)

The Committee is disturbed to note that cable piracy has become a serious menace to the picture quality of Doordarshan channels as the cable operators are sabotaging Doordarshan signal by transmitting it on "Jagi" antenna instead of on 'Dish' antenna. The matter is alarming in view of the fact that due to such sabotage which results in the deterioration of the sharpness of the picture quality of Doordarshan *vis-a-vis* the private channels viewers are switching over to other channels. However, the Committee finds some consolation in the assurances given by the CEO, Prasar Bharati and the Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting that the matter would be discussed in the State Information Ministers' Meeting and it is planned to bring forward an ordinance making it obligatory on the part of cable operators to give Doordarshan the same treatment as given to the private channels. The Committee recommends to both the Ministry and Prasar Bharati to take up the matter with utmost seriousness and bring forward the required legislation without much loss of time so that some control is exercised over the cable operators and they are not allowed to discriminate against Doordarshan.

Reply of the Government

In order to ensure good quality reception of Doordarshan channels on cable networks, the Government has made necessary amendments in the Cable TV (Network) Rules making it compulsory for all cable operators to carry two channels of Doordarshan on the prime band in the satellite mode. The cable operators are also required not to transmit any channel on the cable network in the same frequency band in which Doordarshan channels DD-1 and DD-2 are transmitted terrestrially, so as to avoid interference.

However, the enforcement of the provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, under which these rules have been issued, lies with State Governments/Union Territories. Ministry of I&B has been regularly pursuing the matter with such Governments for effective enforcement.

It is the understanding of the Ministry that a more satisfactory mechanism for regulating functioning of cable networks will become possible when Broadcasting Bill is enacted by the Parliament and Broadcast Regulatory Authority becomes functional. When the Broadcast Regulatory Authority becomes available it will be possible for consumers and consumers' organizations to seek and get action against defaulting cable operators. It is submitted that a Broadcasting Bill was introduced in Parliament in 1997 and it was referred to a Joint Select Committee. However, before the Select Committee could give its report, the Lok Sabha got dissolved for general elections in 1999. The Ministry is attempting to prepare a fresh Broadcasting Bill with the objective of introducing it in the Parliament during the Budget Session.

NEW DELHI;
November, 2000
Kartika, 1922 (Saka)

SOMNATH CHATTERJEE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-THIRD SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (1999-2000)

The Committee sat on Monday, 30 October, 2000 from 1100 hours to 1240 hours in Committee Room No. 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Somnath Chatterjee — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Mahendra Baitha
3. Prof. Dukha Bhagat
4. Shri Tara Chand Bhagora
5. Shri Nikhil Kumar Chaudhary
6. Shri T. Govindan
7. Adv. Uttamrao Dhikale
8. Dr. C. Krishnan
9. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
10. Shri G. Ram Mohan
11. Shri K.A. Sangtam
12. Shri Saroj Tufani
13. Rajkumari Ratna Singh
14. Shri Vijay Kumar Sorake
15. Shri G. Ganga Reddy
16. Shri K.K. Kaliappan

Rajya Sabha

17. Shri Balkavi Bairagi
18. Shri Narendra Mohan
19. Dr. Y. Radhakrishna Murthy
20. Shri P.N. Siva
21. Shri Kartar Singh Duggal
22. Shri K. Rama Mohana Rao
23. Shrimati Kum Kum Rai
24. Shri Shatrughan Sinha
25. Shri Rajiv Shukla

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.K. Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*
2. Shri A.S. Chera — *Under Secretary*

**Representatives of Cellular Operators
Association of India (COAI)**

1. Shri T.V. Ramachandran — Director General, COAI
2. Shri Manoj Kohli — CEO, Escotel Mobile
3. Shri T.R. Dua — Director, Bharti Enterprises
4. Shri Umang Das — Spice Communications
5. Shri R.C. Rastogi — Birla AT & T
6. Shri Jogesh Nayar — MD, Koshika Telecom Ltd.
7. Ms. Anjali Hans — Manager, COAI
8. Shri K.R. Gopakumar — COAI

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the representatives of Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) to the sitting of the Committee.

3. *** *** *** ***
4. *** *** *** ***
5. *** *** *** ***

6. The Committee then took up for consideration the following Draft Reports and adopted the same without any modifications/ amendments.

- (i) *** *** *** ***
- (ii) Draft Sixteenth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations of the Committee contained in its Eighth Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha) on "Doordarshan-Production of programmes in-house and by outside producers" relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

(Vide Paragraph No. 5 of Introduction of Report)

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE EIGHTH REPORT (TWELFTH LOK SABHA) OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- I. Total number of Recommendations 45
- II. Recommendations/Observations which have accepted by the Government:
Para Nos. 25, 27, 28, 42, 43, 63, 64, 66, 67, 69, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 111, 124, 136, 137, 138, 146, 147, 148, 152, 161, 162 and 163
Total 30
Percentage 66.6%
- III. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of the reply of the Government:
Para Nos. 44, 65, 68, 70, 107, 109, 110, 123 and 129
Total 09
Percentage 20%
- IV. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:
Para Nos. 24, 26, 45, 114 and 160
Total 05
Percentage 11.1%
- V. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies one of the interim nature:
Para No. 122
Total 01
Percentage 2.2%