

TWENTIETH REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2001)

(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND
BROADCASTING

*[Action taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations
contained in its Eleventh Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha)
of Standing Committee on Information Technology on
'Demands for Grants' (2000-2001)]*

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 17.4.2001
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 18.4.2001*



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

April, 2001/Chaitra, 1923 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2001)

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. Sardar 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. Shri P.D.T. Achary | — | <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shri S.K. Sharma | — | <i>Deputy Secretary</i> |
| 3. Shri Bhupesh Kumar | — | <i>Assistant Director</i> |

INTRODUCTION

1. I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on Information Technology (2001) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on its behalf, present this Twentieth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations of the Committee contained in its Eleventh Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2000-2001)' relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

2. The Eleventh Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 17 April, 2000 and also laid in Rajya Sabha on the same day. The Government furnished Action Taken Notes on the recommendations contained in the Report on 25 August, 2000.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at its sitting held on 12 April, 2001.

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 Eleventh Report of Standing Committee on Information Technology (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix-II.

NEW DELHI;
12, April, 2001
22Chaitra, 1923 (Saka)

SOMNATH CHATTERJEE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

CHAPTER I
REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology deals with the action taken by Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in its Eleventh Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2000-2001)' pertaining to Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

2. The Eleventh Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 17 April, 2000 and was also laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha the same day. It contained 23 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: 35, 36, 52, 56, 57, 67, 70, 71 and 79

Total - 9
Chapter - II

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

Paragraph Nos: 7, 15, 32, 33, 34, 50, 51, 54, 55, 66 and 69

Total -11
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: 14, 53 and 68

Total - 3
Chapter - IV

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

Paragraph No: Nil

Total - 0
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 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.

**Filling up the vacant positions in the Prasar Bharati Board
(Paragraph No. 14)**

6. The Committee in its Eleventh Report has expressed concern at vacant positions on the Prasar Bharati Board for a long time. The Committee had expressed hope that the filling of the vacant positions would be given top priority and a full fledged Prasar Bharati Board would be functional at the earliest. The Committee also wanted to know the basis of the removal of two Members of the Board.

7. The Ministry in its action taken note has stated that filling up of the vacant positions of the Chairman, three part time members, Member (Personnel), Member (Finance), DG Doordarshan and DG-AIR by regular incumbents all at one go would create discontinuity in the management of Prasar Bharati which could have a bearing on its smooth functioning. Therefore, the Government will fill up these positions within next few months in two or three instalments after finalisation and notification of the Rules of Recruitment. The Ministry has further explained that the two Members of the Board have been retired under a legal requirement of sub-section (3) and (5) of section 6 of the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990, and on the basis of criteria suggested by the Attorney-General.

8. The Committee finds that the positions of Chairman, three part time Members, Member (Personnel), two representatives of employees; DG-Doordarshan and DG-AIR on Prasar Bharati Board are still lying vacant though the Ministry had assured the Committee that these positions would be filled up in 2-3 instalments within a few months. The Committee is also not convinced with the reasoning

advanced by the Ministry that filling up of positions by regular incumbents all at one go would create discontinuity in the management of Prasar Bharati having a bearing on its smooth functioning. It is a matter of grave concern. The Committee hopes that the Ministry will realize the utmost importance of a full fledged Prasar Bharati Board as contemplated by Prasar Bharati Act for the efficient and smooth functioning of the Prasar Bharati. The Committee strongly reiterates that the Government should not indulge in delaying tactics and accord top most priority to the filling up of the vacant positions in the Prasar Bharati Board at the earliest to enable the national broadcaster to fulfil its obligations to the nation in a highly competitive environment.

**Cost and Time over run implementation of projects
(Paragraph Nos. 32 and 33)**

9. The Committee in paragraph 32 and 33 of its earlier report had observed that physical performance of All India Radio and Doordarshan in installation of infrastructure hardware had been extremely unsatisfactory. Prasar Bharati could complete only 7 studio projects against target of 24 and one broadcasting centre against the target of 7. No community centre was completed though target of 5 centres was fixed. The financial performance of All India Radio was also poor as it could expend only Rs. 81.58 crores against the outlay of Rs. 150 crores. Again, AIR could commission only 17 transmitters against the target of 34. Similarly, Doordarshan could set up only one HPT against the target of 9 in 1998-99. During 1999-2000, only 4 HPTs were set up against the target of 9. The financial performance in this case was also not up to the mark as an expenditure of Rs. 126.53 crores could be incurred against the outlay of Rs. 296.25 crores. During the first three years of the 9th Plan, the overall performance of Doordarshan has been very unsatisfactory. It could install only 6 HPTs against the target of 40 for DD-1; 7 HPTs against the target of 40 for DD-II. The financial expenditure during this period was less than 15% as on 31 January, 2000. The reasons given by the Prasar Bharati for dismal performance were the usual oft-repeated ones - non-availability of sites, contractor's problem, law and order problems, etc. The Committee took a serious view of it and desired the Ministry to identify the factors responsible for non-performance and apply minimum corrective measures.

10. In its Action Taken notes Prasar Bharati has stated that in addition to implementation arrangements, there has been the factor of non-availability

of resources which had substantially contributed to many infrastructural works being delayed. It has been explained that a large portion of Annual Plan of Prasar Bharati was financed by commercial receipts of the corporation. Therefore, availability of amount provided in the Annual Plan for infrastructural works as well as for other items depended on commercial earnings as projected in the Annual Plan and the Budget. During the previous years' commercial earnings of Prasar Bharati, there was decline of about Rs.100 crores per year. Because of it, resources for this year were not really made available for works to that extent. This reduced availability of resources was responsible for delay in completion of less number of works. It is further contended that this trend of declining resources has been reversed in 1999-2000 and infrastructure works are expected to show faster progress and support.

11. The Committee is constrained to observe that various projects of All India Radio and Doordarshan could not be completed within the targeted time-span. Besides the oft-repeated reasons of non-availability of sites, law and order problem, contractual problems, etc. another reason *viz.* non-availability of funds due to lower generation of funds by All India Radio and Doordarshan has also been added. The Committee finds itself unable to accept such excuses. When the commercial earnings of Prasar Bharati have been declining for the last 3 years and funds to that extent were not made available, the Committee is at loss to understand why this fact was not brought to its notice earlier. Whatever may be the reasons, the fact remains that major projects are pending on for years for one reason or the other. Since comparatively more funds were available in 1999-2000, the Committee desires Prasar Bharati to complete all the delayed projects on priority basis. The Ministry of I&B should also strictly monitor with a view to take timely corrective steps so that the projects are completed well in time.

**Performance of DAVP
(Paragraph No. 53)**

12. The Committee in its earlier report had expressed concern on the poor financial performance of DAVP during Ninth Plan and on not formulating any concrete policy/guidelines by the Ministry to ascertain/verify the circulation figures claimed by various newspapers. The Committee had also desired that some reliable agency be established to ensure that no person was able to corner advertisements on the basis of false circulation figures.

13. The Ministry in its action taken note has stated that the expenditure figure of Rs. 278.79 lakhs was inadvertently wrongly reported upon whereas total expenditure incurred was Rs. 440.48 lakhs upto 31.03.2000. As regards the circulation figures of newspapers, it has been stated that the Registrar of Newspapers for India carries out verification of circulation claims of newspapers/periodicals by calling required documents from the publishers, by verifying original documents at the premises of the publications and by conducting surprise spot checks. The Ministry has submitted further that owing to limited manpower spot checks were carried out only in a few cases. The Ministry has agreed with the view of the Committee that the arrangements for verifying claims for circulation submitted by the newspapers/journals is not satisfactory.

14. The Committee regrets to note that the issue of formulating detailed policy and guidelines and establishing a reliable agency to verify the circulation figures claimed by newspapers is being pursued by the Committee for the last two years. However the Ministry has not been able to implement the recommendation. The Committee expresses serious concern for not according due priority to the views of the Committee and for not implementing the same timely. The Committee reiterates that the recommendation may be given top most priority. A compliance report may be submitted to the Committee urgently.

**Telecast of Documentaries of Films Division by Doordarshan Channels
(Paragraph No. 68)**

15. The Committee in its Eleventh Report has expressed serious concern for not telecasting of documentaries of Films Division at Doordarshan Channels. The Committee had recommended that good films produced by the Films Division, which give specific and acceptable (desirable) message to the society should be telecast on Doordarshan channels and in cinema halls regularly irrespective of commercial viability.

16. The Ministry in its action taken note has stated that Doordarshan telecasts relevant documentaries of Films Division as per requirement of each Doordarshan Channel. The Ministry has further submitted that a decision has recently been taken that Doordarshan would provide fixed time slots on regional satellite channels for documentaries of Films Division on revenue sharing basis.

17. The Committee appreciates the decision to telecast documentaries of Films Division on regional satellite channels of Doordarshan on revenue sharing basis. However, it would like to be apprised of the details of documentaries telecast during the first six months of the decision taken, name of channels on which documentaries screened and other details about the duration and revenue earned etc.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 35)

The Committee takes a serious note of the problem that the Cable Operators are biased against Doordarshan and do not show DD channels through dish Antenna on profit consideration which cannot be accepted. The Committee approves the idea that the Ministry should make appropriate legislative provisions in the forthcoming Broadcasting Bill to make the Cable operators fulfil their obligations. The Government is urged to take faster action in this regard and bring the Bill before Parliament at the earliest.

Action Taken by the Government

With a view to ensure quality reception of Doordarshan channels through cable network, the Central Government has notified that it is obligatory for the cable operators to:---

- (a) transmit at least two Doordarshan channels on their cable network in the prime band on channels other than those carrying terrestrial broadcast frequencies;
- (b) take only satellite signals of Doordarshan channels for transmission on their cable network by dish antenna/TVRO and not yagi antenna; and
- (c) not transmit any channel on the cable network in the same frequency band in which Doordarshan channels DD-I and DD-II are transmitted terrestrially, so as to avoid interference.

All the State Governments/Union Territories were requested to ensure compliance with these provisions of the notifications. Doordarshan has also instructed all its Zonal Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers and Station Engineers of all its Doordarshan centers to interact closely with cable operators as well as law enforcing authorities of State Governments in their respective

areas for implementing these provisions of the Cable Act. These Engineering officers are also regularly monitoring the technical quality of Doordarshan signals distributed by cable operators and are sending periodical reports to the Directorate General of Doordarshan where a Cable TV Cell has been formed to look into these matters.

Meanwhile a proposal to bring the necessary changes in the existing Cable Law has been approved by the Government to meet the immediate regulatory and enforcement requirements, particularly to ensure carriage of DD channels by cable operators. The Amendment Bill has been introduced in the Lok Sabha during the monsoon session.

[M/O I & B OM No. G-20016/2/2000 — B & A, dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 36)

The Committee is deeply concerned with excess of advertisement being telecast by Doordarshan and also by other channels. The Committee recommends that code of conduct formulated for the purpose should be strictly observed by Doordarshan. It also feels strongly that the Government should come forward with a legislation to make the private channels conform to the code of conduct applicable to DD.

Action Taken by the Government

Doordarshan

Prasar Bharati has intimated that Doordarshan Commercial Service takes care that excess advertisements are not telecast by Doordarshan in their programmes. Efforts are made to show commercials in such a manner that no disturbance is caused to the viewers while watching the programmes, serials and films. They are telecast within the permissible limits and during specified breaks only.

As regards the code of Conduct, Doordarshan Commercial Service has a strict Advertising Code and it is followed.

Private Channels

The programmes of Indian private channels uplinked from within the country are required to adhere to the programme and advertisement codes followed by Prasar Bharati. In the event of violation, the licences can be cancelled. In so far as foreign satellite channels are concerned, these are uplinked from outside the country and are, therefore, outside the ambit of

Indian laws. However, the programmes of such channels, when distributed through cable television network within the country, are regulated by the provisions contained in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. Encrypted foreign satellite channels, when transmitted through cable television networks, are also required to adhere to the programme/ advertisement codes prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. The Cabinet has approved introduction of a Cable TV (Regulation's) Amendment Bill in the forthcoming session of Parliament. Amongst others, one of the objectives of the proposed amendment is to bring the 'free to air' and the 'encrypted channels' at par for the purpose of application of programme and advertisement codes. A proposal for amendment of Cable TV (Regulations) Rules has been introduced in the Lok Sabha for bringing the private channels within the purview of the programme and advertisement codes.

[M/O I & B OM No. G-20016/2/2000 — B & A, dated 09.08.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 52)

The Committee appreciates the production of CD on Gandhiji by the Publications Division which contains 50 thousand pages on texts, books, letters of Gandhiji. It is a commendable effort. The Committee hopes that the Ministry would take up similar creative projects in hand in future.

Action Taken by the Government

Publications Division has also initiated the project for production of CD on Gandhiji in Hindi. At present, the work is in full progress. The Ministry has approved the proposal of bringing out about half a dozen more, new CDs by the Publications Division. Work on these CDs is scheduled to begin during the current year.

[M/O I & B OM No. 20016/2/2000 — B & A dated 09.08.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 56)

The Committee is gravely concerned to note that hostile anti-India propaganda has been going on Radio and Television from across the border and effective measures are required to be taken in this regard. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has drawn a strategy and giving effect to it. For J&K, a special package has been drawn up in this regard which is reported to be showing good results. The Committee would like the Ministry to take up such similar steps in regard to the entire border areas as early as possible.

Action Taken by the Government

Besides various programmes already aired by AIR, Jalandhar in Punjabi and Saraiki, AIR is considering a programme in Sindhi, Kachchi and Gujarati languages which are spoken by and large in the Saurashtra and Kachch region. This programme will target the audience located across the border and will use the popular format of characters who will interact with each other. This programme will be produced by AIR, Ahmedabad and be broadcast from Rajkot.

Doordarshan have telecast some films on the theme prepared by MHA in Punjabi and English on regional network of Doordarshan Kendra, Jalandhar. These films have also been telecast on DD-India, the channel reaching out across the various countries over the globe. DDK, Jalandhar will further strengthen the campaign by producing additional in house programme in consultation with MHA for countering anti-India propaganda.

The observations of the Committee regarding special scheme on the lines of J&K package for other border areas has been noted and action has been initiated to finalize similar schemes for the North East and the Western Border so as to improve the DD and AIR services.

[M/O I & B O. M. No. G. 20016/2000- B & A dated 09.08.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 57)

The Committee notes that the propaganda being carried out from a neighbouring country has been very effective and it is being done in Punjabi language as it is understood in most part of the border areas. The Committee, therefore, desires that to counter the hostile propaganda. All India Radio and Doordarshan should also prepare software programmes in that language so that message conveyed in the programmes are widely understood.

Action Taken by the Government

AIR, Jalandhar is already broadcasting programmes to counter the anti India propaganda being beamed from across the border. Des Punjab programme (a programme in Punjabi) is being broadcast for two hours daily. In addition, a 30 - minute Saraiki (a dialect of Punjabi) programme for Saraiki speaking areas in Pakistan is also broadcast by the station. Programmes like Drishti, News in Punjabi, Teeji Ankh, Tabsira, Aaina, Rabta, Guldasta and Kujh Sunie Kujh Kahie are the main programmes broadcast by the station in

this respect. AIR, Jalandhar will also consider producing special programmes on personalities like Sheikh Farid, Baba Bulhe Shah, Shah Hussain and Sassi Bashim. Classic radio plays related to cultural heritage on Punjab and Punjabi are will be considered. Saraiki programme of Jalandhar will also be aired from AIR, Suratgarh after the infrastructure is put in place. AIR is considering to start a programme in Sindhi, Kachchi and Gujarati languages which are spoken, by and large, in the Saurashtra and Kachch region. This programme will target the audience located across the border and will use the popular format of characters who will interact with each other. This programme will be produced by AIR, Ahmedabad and be broadcast from Rajkot and Bhuj.

In so far as Doordarshan is concerned, Core Group of Secretaries on Media considered the proposal of Ministry of Home Affairs on Media strategy for being adopted in Punjab and approved in principle a budget provision of Rs. 2 crores for creation of special software. Subsequently the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Home Affairs have advised that these funds may be located from the sanctioned budget grant of Prasar Bharati or from the additional funds sanctioned under J&K package. Prasar Bharati is taking action to manage programme for Punjab out of funds from J&K package for the present and will seek funds later. Meanwhile, a reputed Director of national fame has been identified for creation of serialized software. It is also informed that three films produced by MHA on Punjab in both English and Punjabi entitled "Agriculture—New Boom", " Punjab on industrial surge" and "Out of Shadows" have been telecast on the Regional network of DDK, Jalandhar reaching out the entire State English versions of these films have also been telecast on DD-India, the channel reaching out across the various countries of the globe. To further strengthen the campaign, Regional network of DDK, Jalandhar would produce additional in house programmes in discussion with MHA for countering anti-India propaganda.

[M/O I & B O.M. No. G-20016/2/2000 — B & A, dated 09.08.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 67)

The Committee draws some satisfaction from the fact that Supreme Court has given its ruling in favour of the Government in relation to screening of documentaries produced by Films Division in private cinema halls. The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should encourage film societies to screen documentaries with social message.

Action Taken by the Government

The suggestion of the Standing Committee has been noted for compliance.

[M.O. I & B O.M. No. G-20016/2/2000 — B & A, dated 09.08.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 70)

The Committee notes with concern that the financial performance of Children's Film Society of India (CFSI) during Ninth Plan was much below the average. It could utilize only Rs. 803.94 lakh (28.71 per cent) out of the outlay of Rs. 2800.00 lakh on 31 January, 2000. The reasons advanced by it like non-availability of good stories, required space for shooting and hostile weather gives an impression as if there are dearth of talents in the country. Besides, it also reflects casual attitude of CFSI. In case of modernization and Audience Research the financial performance has been equally dismal that the expenditure incurred is Rs. 5.57 lakh, and Rs. 13.84 lakh respectively against the outlays of Rs. 45.00 lakh each in the respective case.

Action Taken by the Government

The CFSI has been allocated an amount of Rs. 3000.00 lakhs for the entire Ninth Five year Plan, which was reduced to Rs. 2800.00 lakhs during the Mid Term Review. As against this during the first three years of the Ninth Five Year Plan, an allocation of Rs. 1475.00 lakhs was made in the Sanctioned Budget Grant, which was revised to Rs.1060.91 lakhs in RE stage of the respective year. In this connection, it may be mentioned that during the first three years, a total provision of Rs.395.00 lakhs was made for the Plan scheme "Construction of CFSI's complex at Hyderabad. However, as already mentioned in this Ministry's comments furnished in reply to para 17 (a) of the questionnaire given by the Standing Committee, this scheme could not be taken up due to the various encumbrances in the land allotted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh as a result of which construction could not commence. Therefore, the RE of the respective year had to be fixed at a lower level. However, as against the Revised Estimates of Rs. 1060.91 lakhs during the first three years, a total amount of Rs. 920.02 lakhs has been released to the Society as Grant-in-Aid.

This comes to 86.71% of the RE. The statement below will explain the position further:

| (Rupees in lakhs) | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Year | SBG | Provision for CFSI's Complex | RE | Grant-in-aid released |
| 1997-1998 | 265.00 | 5.00 | 190.91 | 140.00 |
| 1998-1999 | 560.00 | 200.00 | 410.00 | 349.74 |
| 1999-2000 | 650.00 | 190.00 | 460.00 | 430.28 |
| Total | 1475.00 | 395.00 | 1060.91 | 920.02 |

The observations of the Standing Committee have been noted. Efforts will be made to streamline activity in CFSI under various schemes.

[M/O. I & B U.O. No. G-20016/2/2000 B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 71)

The Committee feels happy at the fact that CFSI was distributing cassettes of their films in schools. This activity requires to be encouraged and stepped up. The impediment like non-availability of VCRs in municipality schools should be resolved by taking up the matter with the concerned authorities. The Committee takes a serious note of the fact that except one no other film of CFSI was screened on the National Channels Doordarshan should ensure screening of adequate number of CFSI films on Doordarshan on a slot suitable to the children. The committee reiterates its observation as made with regard to screening of films produced by Films Division.

Action Taken by the Government

The observations of the Committee regarding stepping up of the activity of distribution of cassettes of CFSI's films through schools have been noted for compliance.

Doordarshan has already telecast following children films originally produced and offered by N'CYP/CFSI during the last 4/5 years:

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|
| I | Diler Bachc2he | T/C on 24.1.95 |
| II | Lavany Preeti (Oriya) | T/C on 9.11.96 |
| III | Abhay | T/C on 8.3.97 |
| IV | Karamati Coat | T/C on 12.7.97 |
| V | Halo | T/C on 14.11.98 |
| VI | Kabhi Pass Kabhi Fail | T/C on 7.8.99 |
| VII | Bal Shivaji | T/C on 27.6.99 |

Doordarshan is willing to consider the telecast of Children feature films originally produced by Children Films Society for India as and when these are offered. CFSI has not provided adequate number of films which require a regular chunk on Doordarshan. The matter is being sorted out between Doordarshan and CFSI.

In consultation with the representatives of Prasar Bharati, a decision has recently been taken that Doordarshan would provide fixed time slots on regional satellite channels for films of N'CYP/CFSI on revenue sharing basis. Prasar Bharati has been advised to take necessary action in this regard in consultation with the N'CYP/CFSI.

[M/O I & B O.M. No. G 20016/2/2038000 B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 79)

The Committee takes a serious note of the fact that in reality AIR coverage in the North East is much below the national average. The national average is 90 per cent area-wise and 97.3 per cent population wise whereas, it is 91.29 per cent and 95.43 per cent respectively as per the figures of the Ministry. Similarly, DD coverage of North East is also very poor, which is 53.2 per cent area-wise and 81.5 per cent population wise as compared to national average of 74.8 per cent and 87.9 per cent respectively. However, in actual practice a large part of North-East is not getting clear signals because of hilly terrain and are not able to get even national news and the infrastructural installations there are inadequately manned. The Committee hopes that the proposed special package for the North East assured by the Ministry as in case of J&K would be finalized soon and implemented as a special programme to bring the North East at par with the national average. It is pertinent to note that in view of the hostile activities on borders, these areas are vulnerable and must be strengthened at the earliest.

Action Taken by the Government

Lately, there have been complaints/references regarding non-receipt of radio signals in some parts of North East. A detailed analysis of the AIR coverage in the North Eastern States has been carried out and coverage figures have been revised as per Annexure II & III.

The existing average coverage of the North East States is 77.8% by area and 95.5% by population. After completion of 9th Plan projects, the expected coverage in the region will be 82% by area and 97.5% by population. The observations of the committee regarding special scheme on the lines of J&K package for other border areas has been noted and action has been initiated to finalize similar schemes for the North East and the Western Border as to improve the DD and AIR services.

[M/O I & B O.M. No. G. 20016/2/2000 B & A dated 9.8.2000]

| Project | Reasons for delay | Present Status | Expected date of completion of project |
|--------------------|--|--|--|
| HPTs (DD 1) | | | |
| Sambalpur | Delay in construction of tower. Tower after erection upto 20 M ht. had to be dismantled as foundation had to be modified, Order for supply and erection of Sambalpur tower was placed on TSL in Jan' 95 and the tower work was originally scheduled to be completed during 1996. | Erection of tower to full height of 150 M completed. Antenna to be hauled up. Pending completion of tower works, HPT Sambalpur has already been commissioned on 1 KW power with a 100M guyed mast in an interim setup. | 2000-2001 (III Qtr.) |
| Banda | Delay in completion of building works. Transmitter has been utilized at Rajamundry for commissioning of interim setup there. Delay in erection of tower by TSL. | Equipment to be installed after it is released from Rajamundry after commissioning of PMt. Setup there by Aug' 2000. Tower erected to full height of 100M. Antenna to be mounted. | 2000-2001 (IV Qtr.) |
| Kathua | Delay in completion of building works. | HPT Kathua since commissioned w.e.f. Feb' 2000 | Already completed. |
| Churachandpur | Law and order problem. Delay in construction of building due to law and order problem. | Building construction completed. Equipment to be installed. Equipment since dispatched to site. | 2000-2001 (IV Qtr.) |

| | | | |
|------------|--|---|------------------------|
| Calicut | Delay in construction of tower. Order for supply and erection of tower on ECIL was placed in June' 96 and it was envisaged to be completed in one year's time. | Erection of tower to full height of 150 M completed. Antenna is to be hauled up. Transmitter was commissioned on 1KW power in an interim setup in August' 94 In LPT building, pending completion of tower work and building construction. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |
| Rajamundry | Delay in construction of tower. Order for supply and erection of tower on ECIL was placed in December' 95 and it was envisaged to be completed in one year's time. | Tower has been erected to full height of 116M and antenna is being hauled up. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |
| Nagpur | Delay in supply of Broad band antenna. | Antenna since supplied. Installation of transmitter completed. Hauling of antenna in progress. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |
| Jodhpur | Delay in supply of Broad band antenna. | Antenna since supplied Installation of transmitter completed. Hauling of antenna to be taken up. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |
| Bhopal | Delay in supply of Broad band antenna. | Installation of transmitter completed. Antenna hauled up Transmitter under testing. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |

| | | | |
|----------------|--|--|------------------------|
| Indore | Delay in supply of Broad band Antenna. | Installation of transmitter completed. Antenna hauled up. Transmitter under testing. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |
| Studios | | | |
| Trichur | Delay in completion of building works. Work of building construction was awarded in August' 96 and envisaged to be completed in one year's time. Building works have now been almost completed. | Installation works in progress. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |
| Ranchi | Delay in completion of building works. Delay in availability of permanent power supply. | Installation works completed. Pmt. P/S available. | Already completed. |
| Mathura | Delay in completion of building works. Work of building construction was awarded in March' 97 and envisaged to be completed in one year's time. Building works completed in March' 99. | Installation works nearing completion. A/C plants installed and testing pending as P/S voltage from UPSEB is low. The matter is being taken up with UPSEB. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |
| Patiala | Delay in completion of building works. Work of building construction was awarded in December, 1995 and envisaged to be completed by Jan' 97. Building was completed around end of 1998. Delay in sorting out the matter regarding P/S connection with UPSEB. | Installation works in progress. A/C plants installed. Lighting work nearing completion. | 2000-2001 (II Qtr.) |

| | | | |
|---------|---|--|---------------------|
| Fazilka | <p>Delay in construction of tower. Order for supply and erection 300M of tower was placed on TSL in December '94 and it was envisaged to be completed in two year's time.</p> | <p>Tower erection in progress (174 M height attained). Pending completion of tower works, HPT Fazilka was commissioned on 1KW power in interim setup in March 98.</p> | 2001 |
| Bhuj | <p>Delay in construction of 300 M tower.</p> | <p>Tower work since completed HPT Bhuj was commissioned with 300 M Tower in July '99. Earlier HPT Bhuj was commissioned with 100M tower in Oct '94 in interim setup.</p> | Already completed. |
| Shahdol | <p>Delay in completion of building works. Work of building construction was awarded in May '98 and technical areas of building were envisaged to be completed by November '99</p> | <p>Construction of building nearing completion.</p> | 2000-2001 (IV Qtr). |

| HPTs (DD II) | |
|--------------|--|
| AGRA | <p>Delay in supply of Broad band antenna.</p> <p>Antenna since supplied. Installation of transmitter completed. Work of hauling of antenna awarded.</p> <p>2000-2001 (II Qtr).</p> |
| Jaipur | <p>Delay in supply of Broad band antenna.</p> <p>Antenna since supplied. Installation of transmitter completed. Work of hauling of antenna awarded.</p> <p>2000-2001 (II Qtr.)</p> |
| Guwahati | <p>Delay in supply of broad band antenna.</p> <p>Work completed.</p> <p>Already completed. HPT Guwahati (DD II) since commissioned w.e.f. 13.6.2000.</p> |
| Silchar | <p>Delay in supply of Broad band antenna.</p> <p>Installation of transmitter completed. Hauling of antenna completed.</p> <p>Transmitter technically ready.</p> |
| Agartala | <p>Delay in supply of Broad band antenna.</p> <p>Antenna since supplied. Installation of transmitter completed. Hauling of antenna being taken up.</p> <p>2000-2001 (II Qtr).</p> |

ANNEXURE II

EXISTING RADIO TRANSMITTERS PROVIDING
COVERAGE IN BORDER AREAS

Indo-Bangladesh Border

| | | |
|-----|-------------|--|
| 1. | Siliguri | 200 KW MW Tr. |
| 2. | Kokrajhar | 20 KW MW Tr. |
| 3. | Tura | 20 KW MW Tr. |
| 4. | Shillong | 100 KW MW Tr. |
| 5. | Silchar | 10 KW MW Tr. |
| 6. | Kailashahar | 6 KW FM Tr. |
| 7. | Belonia | 6 KW FM Tr. |
| 8. | Lungleh | 6 KW FM Tr. |
| 9. | Aizawl | 20 KW MW Tr. |
| 10. | Calcutta | 1000 KW MW Tr. 200 KW MW Tr. 100 KW MW Tr. 20 KW MW Tr. 10 KW MW Tr. |
| 11. | Murshidabad | 6 KW FM Tr. |
| 12. | Guwahati | 100 KW MW Tr. |
| 13. | Agartala | 20 KW MW Tr. |
| 14. | Dhubri | 6 KW FM Tr. |

Indo-Burma Border

- | | | |
|----|-----------|---------------|
| 1. | Dibrugarh | 300 KW MW Tr. |
| 2. | Imphal | 50 KW MW Tr. |
| 3. | Aizawl | 20 KW MW Tr. |

Indo-Nepal Border

- | | | |
|----|-----------|---------------|
| 1. | Lucknow | 300 KW MW Tr. |
| 2. | Gorakhpur | 100 KW MW Tr. |
| 3. | Patna | 100 KW MW Tr. |
| 4. | Siliguri | 200 KW MW Tr. |

Indo-Pakistan Border

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Srinagar | 200 KW MW Tr. |
| 2. | Jammu | 300 KW MW Tr. 10 KW FM Tr. |
| 3. | Jalandhar | 200 KW MW Tr. |
| 4. | Suratgarh | 300 KW MW Tr. |
| 5. | Jodhpur | 100 KW MW Tr. |
| 6. | Ahmedabad | 200 KW MW Tr. |
| 7. | Rajkot | 300 & 100 KW MW Tr. |

[M/o I & B, O. M. No. G 20016/2/2000- B & A, dated 9.8.2000]

ANNEXURE III

SCHMES UNDER IMPLEMENTATION FOR IMPROVING
COVERAGE IN BORDER AREAS

| Sl. No. | Location | Scheme | Target Date |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Indo-Bangladesh Border | | | |
| 1. | Siliguri (WB) | 10 KW FM Tr. | Technically ready |
| 2. | Darjeeling (WB) | -do- | 2001-2002 |
| 3. | Silchar (Assam) | 20 KW MW Tr. (Repl.of 10 KW MW Tr.) | 2000-2001 |
| 4. | Shillong (Meghalaya) | 10 KW FM Tr. | 2000-2001 |
| 5. | Agartala (Tripura) | 10 KW FM Tr. | -do- |
| 6. | Longtherai (Tripura) | 6 KW FM Tr. | 2001-2002 |
| 7. | Nutan Bazar (Tripura) | 1 KW FM Tr. | 2000-2001 |
| 8. | Dharmanagar (Tripura) | 1 KW FM Tr. | 2001-2002 |
| Indo-Burma Border | | | |
| 1. | Chemphai (Mizoram) | 1 KW FM Tr. | 2000-2001 |
| 2. | Churachandpur (Manipur) | 6 KW FM Tr. | *1999-2000 |
| 3. | Imphal (Manipur) | 300 KW MW Tr. (Repl.of 50 KW MW Tr.) | 2001-2002 |
| 4. | Changlong (Arunachal) | 1 KW FM Tr. | 2000-2001 |
| Indo-Nepal Border | | | |
| 1. | Siliguri (WB) | 10 KW FM Tr. | Technically ready |
| 2. | Darjeeling (WB) | -do- | 2001-2002 |

* Subject to congenial law and order situatison.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---|-----------|
| Indo-Pakistan Border | | | |
| 1. | Srinagar (J&K) | 300 KW MW Tr. (Repl. of 200 KW MW Tr.) | 2001-2002 |
| 2. | Kupwara (J&K) | 20 KW MW Tr. | 2000-2001 |
| 3. | Naushera (J&K) | -do- | -do |
| 4. | Rajouri (J&K) | 10 KW FM Tr. | -do |
| 5. | Jammu (J&K) | 50 KW SW Tr. (Repl. of 1 KW SW Tr.) | 2000-2001 |
| 6. | Kathua (J&K) | 10 KW FM Tr. (Repl. of 6 KW FM Tr.) | 2000-2001 |
| 7. | Jodhpur (Raj.) | 300 KW MW Tr. (Repl. of 100 KW MW Tr.) | 2001-2002 |
| 8. | Bhuj (Gujarat) | 20 KW MW Tr. (Repl. of 10 KW MW Tr.) | 2000-2001 |

[M/O I&B, O.M. No. G-20016/2/2000-B&A, dated 9.8.2000]

CHAPTER III

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

Recommendation (Para No. 7)

The Committee notes that the Ministry had projected during 1999-2000 to the Planning Commission an outlay of Rs. 18000 lakh for All India Radio which was drastically scaled down to Rs. 12200 lakh. For information Sector also the outlay was curtailed from the projected Rs.2382.11 lakh to Rs. 1926.00 lakh. Similarly in case of Films Sector the proposed outlay of Rs.5472.75 lakh was curtailed to Rs. 3660.00 lakh. In case of outlay projected for 2000-2001 the Planning Commission has resorted to extensive cuts. The Ministry had projected for AIR Annual Plan outlay Rs.28115 lakh which has been reduced to Rs. 14400 lakh. In case of Doordarshan also the reduction has been equally drastic from Rs. 82800 lakh to Rs. 50044 lakh. The Committee is perturbed at the drastic reduction in annual plan outlay and apprehends that it would lead to substantial shortfall in completion of developmental projects and installation of basic infrastructural equipment. It will hamper the renewal and replacement of old and obsolete equipments and would also take its toll of upgradation of technology. The Committee is of the opinion that in view of the competition in public broadcasting sector from private sector including foreign broadcasting companies all out help should be provided to All India Radio and Doordarshan to substantially improve quality of their network. In no case, financial constraints be allowed to bring down physical projections. Otherwise, it will have crippling effect on the functioning of AIR and Doordarshan in future.

Action Taken by the Government

The recommendations of the Standing Committee have been examined in consultation with the Planning Commission. Planning Commission has

indicated that the Ministry, during the first three years of the Ninth Plan has not been able to spend the outlay allocated, as it has not been able to raise the Internal and Extra Budgetary Resources (IEBR) envisaged for Prasar Bharati. However, the Ministry's argument that the broadcasting sector needed extra resources to survive in a competitive environment was accepted and a 25% increase in the Budgetary Support in normal activities of the sector plus Rs. 100 crores for the J&K special package was recommended by the Planning Commission, for Annual Plan 2000-2001. According to Planning Commission, due to the very tight resource position facing the economy, no substantial step up in Budgetary Support could be expected.

2. The Ministry is in agreement with the recommendations of the Standing Committee that reductions in Annual Plan outlay would hamper the renewal and replacement of equipment, upgradation of Technology, completion of ongoing works and Installation of basic infrastructure equipment. The Ministry, while finalizing the scheme-wise allocations for various projects, has endeavoured to provide for the essential requirements and larger objectives/targets set out for the Ministry, to the extent possible.

[M/o I & B O.M. No. G20016/2/2000-B & A, dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 15)

The Committee is distressed to note that the Broadcasting Bill which was introduced in Parliament as early as April, 1997 could not be enacted so far. The delay in the enactment is stated to be partly due to certain changes being incorporated in the Bill to make it broad based. The Committee feels that the time of three years is more than enough to incorporate any modifications that may be needed. The Committee urges the Ministry to expedite enactment of the Bill during the current session of Parliament as it is expected to facilitate improvement in the broadcasting sector.

Action Taken by the Government

It is submitted that the delay in enactment of the Broadcasting Bill has not been due to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Parliament had referred the Broadcasting Bill to a Joint Select Committee. The Joint Select Committee, however, could not complete its work and submitted its report by the time the previous Lok Sabha was dissolved for General elections,

therefore, the Broadcasting Bill introduced in 1997 has lapsed. The Ministry of I&B has taken prompt action to give shape to its proposals in view of changes that have come about in the country in regard to Broadcasting sector and in regard to broadcasting technology.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had completed its consideration of the new Broadcasting Bill, 2000, after incorporating the necessary changes in Broadcasting Bill, 1997 with a view to introduce the same in the last session of Parliament. However, the Group of the Ministers on Telecom and IT convergence while considering the new Telecommunication Bill to replace the old Telegraph Act, 1885, opined that keeping in view the emerging convergence of Telecommunications, Broadcasting and IT, it would be desirable to have a single legislation covering all the relevant sectors. Accordingly, a sub-group of the main group (GoM) is working to give a final shape to the integrated legislation covering all aspects of Broadcasting, Telecommunications and IT convergence. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has already submitted a draft Communication Bill for consideration of the Sub-Group.

[M/o I & B O.M. No. G20016/2/2000-B & A, dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 32)

The Committee observes that the physical performance of AIR in relation to installation of infrastructural hardware like Studios and Transmitters has been extremely unsatisfactory. During 1999-2000 the Ministry was able to complete only 7 Studio Projects against a target of 24. The performance is equally dismal in case of commissioning of Studio Projects as only 13 could be commissioned against a target of 25. In case of Broadcasting Centres and Community Radio Stations, the performance is more disappointing. The Ministry could construct only one Broadcasting Center against the target of 7 and 'nil' Community Centers against the target of 5. The pace of expenditure has also been completely unsatisfactory. The Ministry could incur the expenditure of only Rs. 81.58 crore against the outlay of Rs. 150.00 crore for the purpose. The Committee is deeply anguished at such unsatisfactory performance. The Ministry should make serious efforts for energizing and strengthening its executive and monitoring wings. The casual approach of the Ministry is further evident from uninspiring performance in installation of the most basic infrastructural projects like transmitters. The Ministry could

commission only 17 transmitters in 1999-2000 against a target of 34. It could spend less than half of funds allocated for the purpose as it could incur the expenditure of only Rs. 1575.48 lakhs against Rs. 3558.20 lakh provided for it. The Committee recommends that the project constructions and monitoring wings should be streamlined with a view to completing the valuable projects timely and the same should not remain only on paper. The Committee may be apprised of the reasons for not commissioning these projects even though the same were technically ready.

Action Taken by the Government

It is submitted that a distinction needs to be drawn between the work directly to be done by the Ministry and the work to be done by Prasar Bharati in regard to which the Ministry has monitoring function. Installation of infrastructural works in AIR and Doordarshan is, under law, the direct responsibility of Prasar Bharati. The role of the Ministry is of monitoring progress as of advising Prasar Bharati from time to time which it has been doing. It is also submitted that in addition to implementation arrangements there has been the factor of net availability of resources in Prasar Bharati which has substantially contributed to many infrastructural works being delayed. This reason arises out of the fact that a large portion of annual plan for Prasar Bharati approved by Planning Commission every year has to be financed by commercial receipts of Prasar Bharati. Therefore, availability of amount provided in the annual plan for infrastructural works, as for other items, depends on commercial earnings monitoring as projected in the annual plan and in the budget. During three previous years, unfortunately, commercial earnings of Prasar Bharati have been declining by about 100 crores per year. This is a large amount and because of this resources of this order have not really been available for being invested in various programmes of Prasar Bharati including on infrastructural works. This reduced availability of resources has meant reduced availability of resources in infrastructural works and has been responsible for delay in completion of such works. Happily, the trend of declining resources has been reversed in 1999-2000 and infrastructural works are expected to show faster progress henceforth.

Studio Projects Targetted to be made technically ready during 1999-2000

Studio projects completed: At the time of submitting report to the Standing Committee 7 studio projects had been completed. Subsequently, 3

more studio projects at Lucknow, Rajkot and Vadodra have been completed. The 10 studio projects completed out of 24 are given below:

| S.No. | Scheme/Place | Remarks |
|-------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Chandigarh-VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 2. | Lucknow FM Ch. | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 3. | Patna -VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 4. | Bhopal -VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 5. | Indore -VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 6. | Ahmedabad -VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 7. | Nagpur - VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 8. | Pune - VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 9. | Rajkot - VB I | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |
| 10. | Vadodara - VB | Commissioned on 31.3.2000 |

Status of balance 14 Studio projects to be completed during 1999-2000 but carried over to 2000-2001

| S.No. | Scheme/Place | Remarks |
|-------|-----------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | Srinagar-VB | Installation of equipment is to be taken up and likely to be completed shortly. |
| 2. | Shillong-FM Ch. | Delay in ordering of equipment. Equipment is being arranged through diversion and studio is expected to be ready shortly. |
| 3. | Khonsa CRS | The state Government has offered a site without building. They are being pursued vigorously to allot a site with building. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |
| 4. | Changlang CRS | Site offered by the State Government did not allow demolition of one room required for erection of antenna tower. This is being sorted out with the State Government. The Project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |
| 5. | Champhai CRS | Since the site offered by the State Government had no approach road, this could not be taken over for installation work. State Government is being pursued to expedite the construction of approach road. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |
| 6. | Phek CRS | Site taken over. The scheme is being revised. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001 |
| 7. | Nutan Bazar CRS | Site offered by the State Government could not be surveyed due to militancy/insurgency in the area. The Zonal office is being asked to expedite survey. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001 |

| | | |
|-----|-------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. | Soro LRS | Civil works were hampered due to the super cyclone that hit Orissa. Civil work has been taken up. The Project is likely to be completed and installation work has been taken up. The project is likely to be completed by December 2000. |
| 9. | Agartala-FM Ch. | Installation of equipment has been taken up and likely to be completed shortly. |
| 10. | Imphal - FM Ch. | Delay in the supply of equipment. The project is likely to be completed by July 2000. |
| 11. | Shantiniketan LRS | Delay in the supply of equipment. The project is likely to be completed by July 2000. |
| 12. | Mandla LRS | Building works completed and installation is in progress. The project is likely to be completed by December 2000. |
| 13. | Saraipalli LRS | Building works are likely to be completed by June' 2000, after the completion of which installation will be taken up and expected to be completed by March 2001. |
| 14. | Rajgarh-LRS | Installation works are in progress and likely to be completed shortly. |

Commissioning of Studio Projects During 1999-2000

At the time of submitting report to the Standing Committee, out of 25 studio projects, 13 projects were commissioned. Subsequently, the remaining 12 projects as detailed below have also been commissioned:

1. Jānshedpur VB
2. Mumbai 2nd FM Channel
3. Jabalpur VB
4. Bangalore FM Channel
5. Guwahati VB
6. Nongstoin, CRS
7. William Nagar, CRS
8. Mon, CRS
9. Saiha, CRS
10. Tuensang, CRS
11. Ziro, LRS
12. Kodaikanal Stn.

Broadcasting Centres and Community Radio Stations

The latest position regarding the six broadcasting centres out of 7 targeted and 5 community radio centres which have been carried forward to 2000-2001 is given below:

Broadcasting Centres:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Soro - 1 KM MW | Civil works have just been completed and installation works have been taken up. The transmitter mast which was under erection collapsed and is being re-erected. The project is likely to be completed by December 2000. |
| 2. Shantiniketan - 3 KW FM | Installation work is in progress. TV tower is to be utilised for mounting FM antenna. The tower is presently under erection. The project is expected to be completed by July 2000. |
| 3. Saraipalli - 1KW FM | Building works are nearing completion, after the completion of which installation will be taken up and expected to be completed by March 2001. |

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 4. Himmatnagar -1KW | Civil works are nearing completion after the MW completion of which installation works will start. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |
| 5. Rajgarh -3 KW FM | Installation works are in progress. FM transmitter just received and is under installation. The project is expected to be completed by September 2000. |
| 6. Mandla -1 KW FM Tr. | Installation activity started. 1KW FM transmitter order to be placed. The project is expected to be completed by March 2001. |

Community Radio Stations:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Khonsa -1KW FM | The State Government has offered a site without building. They are being pursued vigorously to allot a site with building. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |
| 2. Changlang -1KW FM | Site offered by the State Government did not allow demolition on one room required for erection of antenna tower. This is being sorted out with the State Government. The Project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |
| 3. Champhai -1 KW FM | Since the site offered by the State Government had no approach road, this could not be taken over for installation work State Government is being pursued to expedite the construction of approach road. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |
| 4. Phek -1 KW FM | Site taken over. The scheme is being revised. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001. |

5. Nutanbazar -1 KW FM Site offered by the State Government could not be surveyed due to Militancy/insurgency in the area. The zonal office is being asked to expedite survey. The project is likely to be completed by March 2001.

Commissioning of Transmitter Projects During 1999-2000

Out of 34 transmitter projects targeted to be commissioned, 31 projects have been commissioned so far. 17 projects were commissioned at the time of submission of report and the following 14 projects have been commissioned subsequently:—

1. Jammu, 10 KW FM
2. Dhubri, 6 KW FM
3. Ranchi, 6 K W FM
4. Jabalpure, 10 KW FM
5. Bangalore, 6 KW FM
6. Guwahati, 10 KW FM
7. Nongstoin, CRS
8. William Nagar, CRS
9. Mon, CRS
10. Saiha, CRS
11. Tuensang, CRS
12. Tawang, 20 KW MW
13. Ziro, 1 KW MW
14. Kodaikanal, 10 KW FM

The remaining three projects viz. Jamshedpur (6 KW FM), Siliguri (10 KW FM) and Mumbai (2nd FM Channel) are also likely to be commissioned shortly.

[M/O I & B O.M. NO. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 11 of Chapter - I)

Recommendation (Para No. 33)

The Committee notes that the performance of the Doordarshan is also marred with the same deficiencies as in the case with All India Radio. In 1998-99 only one HPT could be set up against the target of 9. On the financial side also the shortfall was very substantial. Only Rs. 307.43 crore could be spent against the outlay of Rs. 449.50 crore. During 1999-2000 also the performance in case of

setting up of HPTs has been less than 50 per cent as only 4 HPTs have been set up against the target of 9. The financial performance is less than 50 per cent as on 31 Jan., 2000 it could incur the expenditure of only Rs. 126.53 crore against the outlay of Rs. 296.52 crore. The overall performance of Doordarshan during the first three years of Ninth Plan has been very unsatisfactory so far as physical and financial achievements are concerned. It could install only 6 HPTs against the target of 40 for DD-I. 7 HPTs against the target of 40 for DD-II. The financial expenditure during this period was less than 50 percent as on 31.1.2000. The Committee is constrained to observe that this is a poor commentary on the performance of the National Broadcaster. The Committee is of the view that shortfall in performance should be only in exceptional circumstances like non-availability of required hardware in the market and natural calamities. The oft repeated reasons advanced by the Ministry of its dismal performance like non-availability of sites, contractors problem, law and order problems etc. are not convincing at all and have become stereo-typed and thus cannot be accepted. Therefore, the Committee is of the strong view that the Ministry should seriously review its performance and identify the factors responsible for non-performance. It seems that the monitoring mechanism is weak in the Ministry. Therefore, immediate corrective measures are required to be taken. The scarce public resources should not to be wasted by reason of delay and incompetence.

Action Taken by the Government

The Budgeted outlay of Rs. 449.40 crores for the year 1998-99 was reduced to Rs. 327.90 crores at RE stage. As such, it may be seen that the expenditure incurred in that year (Rs. 307.44 crores) indicates 93.76% achievement of financial targets. In 1999-2000 also, against an allocation of Rs. 286.52 crores for capital expenditure, Rs. 283.12 crores was the actual expenditure, signifying 98.81% utilization of funds.

The physical achievements in respect of major projects during the first three years of the 9th Plan are as under:

| Project category | 9th Plan Target | Completed during first 3 years of 9th Plan (April 1997—March 2000) |
|------------------|-----------------|--|
| Studio | 23 | 14 |
| HPT (DD-I) | 40 | 7 |
| HPT (DD-II) | 40 | 7 |
| LPT/VLPT | 422 | 276 |

The main reasons for delay in completion of some of the major projects and their present status is given in Annexure-I.

Apart from the reasons given, it is pertinent to note that a number of projects/schemes originally not targeted were taken up during the first three years of the 9th Plan. Some of these are listed below:—

1. Establishment of facilities for Sports Channel.
2. Establishment of facilities for New Channel.
3. Establishment of digital uplinks for 5 Channels.
4. Establishment of simulcast uplinking facilities at 7 DD Stations.
5. Establishment of uplinking facilities at Nagpur.
6. Schemes for modernization of studio centres.

Doordarshan is taking every possible measure to complete the ongoing projects at the earliest. Action Plans are prepared every year, and all projects are closely monitored by the Zonal offices and the Headquarters. Progress at each project is reviewed at the level of E-in-C on a regular basis.

[M/O I & B O.M. NO. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 11 of Chapter - I)

Recommendation (Para No. 34)

The Committee is deeply concerned to note the serious drawbacks in the areas of transmission quality, content and presentation of programmes by Doordarshan *vis-a-vis* the private and foreign T.V. channels. The Committee hopes that the Prasar Bharati Board would be able to introduce digitalization of transmission at a faster pace resulting in improvement in quality of transmission. However, digitalization must be followed by an appropriate measure to reduce the price of the special TV sets required to receive the digital transmission. Committee draws some satisfaction from the fact that Prasar Bharati has analysed its weaknesses and remedial steps are being taken to improve quality of transmission and increased number of channels are being made available to the viewers.

Action Taken by the Government

In order to maintain a high standard of technical quality of its transmissions, Doordarshan has been modernizing its network from time to time. This is a continuous process and modernization schemes are implemented, depending on availability of resources. Digital transmission in satellite mode has already been started (at present 5 satellite channels are in digital mode) and this has brought improvement in transmission quality. Doordarshan plans to set up digital terrestrial transmitters at Delhi , Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai during 2000-2001. These transmitters, when commissioned would provide enhanced picture and sound quality and it would be possible to telecast 4 to 6 programmes from each transmitter. Further, digitalization of terrestrial transmission would depend on availability of requisite resources.

Even after digitalizing DD signals from studio to satellite and back up to cable operator level, the signal from cable operator to the homes necessarily remains in analog format. The quality of this signal will be good if the cable operator receives signal from the satellite by dish antenna and feeds that signal to the homes, but if the cable operator receives only the analog signal of DD by ordinary Yagi antenna and feeds that to the homes, the quality of picture remains inferior. Unfortunately, there are reports that most cable operators are receiving DD signals only by Yagi antenna. It is suspected that they are doing this under the influence of competing private channels so that DD signals are seen to be inferior by the viewing public. To address this problem the Government has approved an amendment proposal to the Cable Networks Act and these have been introduced in the Lok Sabha in the Monsoon Session. Once the Parliament approves the amendment proposals, cable operators will not be able to give inferior treatment to Doordarshan.

Completely switching over from analog format to digital format for satellite as well as terrestrial channels for the whole country is also being considered by the Government. This would be a major technological and operational effort. Switching over to digital format will enable 20 or more terrestrial channels to be established in all parts of the country. Some of these can be used even for information transfer. The digital images are much sharper and can be received even in mobile vehicles. The power requirement for digital transmission is also much less. However, change over from analog format to digital format will require very large resources and for a large country like India, the process will take 10-15

years, once it is started. Most of the developed countries have already started the process. The Ministry has formulated proposals in this regard and Government decision is expected to be available in next few months. If the proposal is approved by the Government, viewers all over the country will have much larger choice in terms of programmes available through digital terrestrial channels, the quality of pictures would be much better and users will be able to avail of internet and e-mail services through digital TV sets by installing some additional equipment.

[M/O. I & B O.M. NO. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 50)

The Committee is of the view that the role of Press Information Bureau is very crucial since it plays central role in dissemination of information countering the hostile propaganda of some neighbouring countries. As such, the Committee is concerned to note that during 1999-2000 the outlay of Rs. 450.00 lakh projected by PIB was substantially curtailed to Rs. 210.00 lakh at approval stage which resulted in unsatisfactory performance. The Committee is perturbed to know that even the reduced outlay was not utilized fully during the last two years. However, the Committee observes that the attitude of the Ministry is very casual in this regard. It could not set up the PIB office at Itanagar. The Ministry should take the views of the Committee seriously and improve the pace of implementation of projects of such crucial importance.

Action Taken by the Government

It is submitted that Ministry has not been casual either in regard to National Press Centre or to PIB office at Itanagar.

The reduction in outlay of PIB for 1999-2000 from proposed Rs. 450 lakhs to Rs. 210 lakhs is mainly under two schemes, viz. 'Construction of National Press Centre' and 'Computerization of activities of PIB' for which the amounts of Rs. 255 lakhs and Rs. 125 lakhs respectively were proposed but then reduced to Rs. 20 lakhs and Rs. 120 lakhs respectively. The reduction was due to non-availability of land for the National Press Centre. The land for setting up the National Press Centre has not been allotted so far, due to which no expenditure could be effected on this scheme. The matter is being pursued actively with Ministry of Urban Development at the highest level for allotment and possession of land.

Against the RE 1999-2000 of Rs. 190.00 lakhs, an expenditure of Rs. 181.89 lakhs has been incurred on Plan schemes of PIB other than "National Press Centre"

and 'Setting up of branch office at Itanagar'. Thus, there has been no shortfall in achievement.

The Branch office of PIB at Itanagar could not be commissioned as Ministry of Finance did not agree to the creation of posts for the office and suggested that PIB may await the recommendations of SIU study regarding fixing norms for staffing and opening of Branch Offices. Recently Minister for I&B has written to Finance Minister for agreeing for creation of a minimum number of posts so that PIB office at Itanagar can be opened.

[M/O. I & B O.M. NO. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 51)

The Committee notes with concern that during 2000-2001 the projected outlay of Rs. 200.00 lakh for Publications Division was sharply reduced to Rs. 97.48 lakh. Even the reduced outlay is not being utilized fully. Out of Rs. 7.00 lakh provided for vehicles only Rs. 0.85 lakh could be utilized. Evidently budgeting procedure has not been taken seriously. On the other hand, the representative of the Ministry submitted during evidence that their project of starting a magazine on "Tender News" could not take off due to inadequate resources. The Committee takes a serious note of such conflicting attitudes, issues and strongly recommends that the Ministry should streamline and rationalize in system of financial allocation for individual projects.

Action Taken by the Government

The outlay for Publications Division was reduced from Rs. 200 lakhs projected by the Directorate, to Rs. 98 lakhs for the year 2000-2001 mainly due to the decision taken to defer implementation of the scheme relating to "Tender News" for which the Directorate proposed to allocate Rs. 103.52 lakhs during 2000-2001. With the result, in Annual Plan 2000-2001, only a token provision of Rs. 1.52 lakhs has been provided for the scheme. In this context, it may be pointed out that the proposal to bring out "Tender News" was primarily aimed to carry information relating to trade viz. foreign/Indian tenders, price quotations etc. However, it was found that the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics also publishes a similar journal titled "Indian Trade Journal" which is a specialized journal brought out by this agency, and the contents of this magazine are identical to that which the proposed "Tender News" was to contain. There would thus have been duplication of effort by different agencies of the Government.

On the price front, it was observed that while "Indian Trade Journal" is priced at Rs. 25 per copy, "Tender News" which was proposed to be brought out in the form of a news paper was to be priced at Rs. 20 per copy. Hence, it was felt that one would be undercutting the other. Hence, this scheme viz. "Tender News" has been deferred for the time being.

As regards the under-utilization of funds provided for vehicles, this is due to the fact that the proposal for creation of necessary posts for running the mobile book-shops was not given by the M/o. Finance. However, a fresh proposal is being sent to that Ministry for their reconsideration.

[M/O. I & B O.M. No. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 54)

The Committee is also seriously perturbed to note that some journals are indulging in character assassination and scurrilous writing. In this respect also there is no Machinery to regulate and discipline such journals and the Government is dependent on District authorities in this regard. The Committee desires that some mechanism be evolved to take and mischievous elements to the task.

Action Taken by the Government

The Press Council of India was established under an Act of Parliament as a selfregulatory body of the Press. In discharge of its two fold function of preserving the freedom of Press and maintaining and improving standards of press, the Council has been, as per its mandate, inquiring into not just complaints received from that the public, but initiating *suo motu* action in matters of serious nature. Through its decisions, the Press Council has built-up a code of ethics to guide the press in the selection and publication of matters. The Council exercises moral authority over the Press.

The Government does not interfere in the functioning of the Press, in pursuance of freedom of speech and expression. However, remedy to individuals against character assassination and scurrilous writings lies before the Courts of Law.

[M/O. I & B OM No. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 55)

The Committee views the role of Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) as very crucial as it imparts the required information to the masses and ensures their

social and cultural development. Therefore, the Committee deplores the fact that the financial allocations which are so essential to expand the activities of DFP have been reduced continuously as the same were Rs. 255.91 lakh in 1998-99 and Rs. 211.00 lakh in 1999-2000. For 2000-2001 only Rs. 165.00 lakh have been allotted. The Committee also takes a serious note of the decline in financial as well as physical performance of DFP. The reduction has been explained in terms of a reduced purchase of films and taking no further expansion of the Directorate. The Committee is concerned to note that even the reduced outlay could not be fully utilized in 1998-99 and 1999-2000 for various reasons.

Action Taken by the Government

Funds allocated to the tune of Rs. 273.00 lakhs during 1998-1999 for the plans schemes were reduced to Rs. 248.36 in RE 1998-1999 as the 48 posts for new Field Publicity Units set up during 1997-98 were sanctioned late in the third and fourth quarter of the financial year 1998-1999. The funds allocated to the tune of Rs. 222.00 lakhs during 1999-2000 for the 5 schemes approved for the Directorate were reduced to Rs. 211.00 lakhs in RE 1999-2000 and further to Rs. 190.36 lakhs in the final grant 1999-2000 as the proposal for creation of 5 more units has been deferred. The physical performance of DFP has been reduced due to suspension of publicity campaigns following announcement of General Elections in 1999-2000 and also for non-filling up of vacant posts of Joint Director/FPOs and other staff, besides the breakdown of equipment such as vehicles, projectors and generators etc. The allocation for the annual plan 2000-2001 has been reduced to Rs. 165.00 mainly due to the completion of the scheme under capital section i.e. "Procurement of Video Projectors". The Directorate of Field Publicity has been advised to purchase in adequate number outstandingly good films like Baba Sahib Ambedkar made by Ministry of Welfare, Hari Bhari and Kairree made by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and documentaries on social themes made by the Films Division of this Ministry. This would ensure a fillip to the activities of the Directorate.

[M/O. I & B OM No. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 66)

The Committee notes that financial performance of Films Division during the first three years of the Ninth Plan has been about 50 percent. It was able to utilize only Rs.1305.39 lakh out of Rs.2450.00 lakh sanctioned to it. In respect of

creating marketing and sales potential, the performance was too dismal. It was 32.05 per cent and 14.20 percent respectively. The performance has fallen miserably short of budget amount during 1999-2000 in respect of development of video facilities . The expenditure incurred in this regard was merely Rs.26.30 lakh against the outlay of Rs. 157.00 lakh. The Committee takes a serious note of it.

Action Taken by the Government

It is submitted that the total approved outlay for the first 3 years of 9th Plan, i.e., for the years 1997-1998, 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 for the various Plan Schemes of Films Division was Rs. 1675.89 lakhs as against the total approved outlay of Rs. 2450.00 lakhs for the entire 9th Plan period. The expenditure during the first 3 years was to the tune of Rs. 1614.22 lakhs which works out to 96.32% of the approved outlay. Year-wise details of outlay approved and expenditure incurred are given below for perusal of the Standing Committee.

| (Rs. in lakhs) | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| Year | Approved outlay | Expenditure | Percentage |
| 1997-1998 | 471.89 | 420.93 | 89.20% |
| 1998-1999 | 576.00 | 568.16 | 98.63% |
| 1999-2000 | 628.00 | 625.13 | 99.54% |
| | 1675.89 | 1614.22 | 96.32% |

Under the Plan Scheme relating to creation of Marketing and Sales Potential in Films Division, the actual expenditure incurred during the first three years of the 9th Plan. i.e. for the years 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 was Rs. 11.79 lakhs as against the approved outlay of Rs. 12 lakhs, which works out to 98.25% of the approved outlay.

Films Division has undertaken transfer of archival films to DVD format under the 'Video facilities' scheme. As this area of activity involved primarily expenditure of revenue nature, the excess allocation under capital head in this scheme was reappropriated during the RE stage to the 'Modernization & Replacement of obsolete equipment of Films Division' scheme.

[M/O. I & B OM No. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 69)

The Committee note that the financial performance of NFDC during Ninth Plan was much below expectation. It could incur expenditure of Rs. 1535.00 lakh only (33.74 per cent) out of the outlay of Rs. 4550.00 lakh. The major shortfalls are in crucial sectors like construction of theatres and import of films. Here the performance was 17.59 percent and 17.72 percent respectively. The export of films has declined from Rs. 183.00 lakh (in value) during 1998-99 to Rs. 75.00 lakh (in value) during 1999-2000. The reasons advanced by the NFDC like opening up of export market and launching of private satellite by people of Indian origin abroad are totally unconvincing and rather reflect on the inefficiency and complacency of NFDC. The Committee recommend that the inherent factors responsible for unsatisfactory performance be identified and remedial action taken and the Committee be apprised of the same.

Action Taken by the Government

One of the main reasons for less than good performance of NFDC, of late, has been that its Board including the position of Chairman has not been fully constituted since 1993. The post of Managing Director has also been vacant for about past two years. Because of this there has been inadequate supervision and direction of the work in NFDC. The Government has now practically rectified this weakness. The new Chairperson has been appointed and she has joined in the post. Selection of the regular Managing Director has also been recommended by the Public Enterprises Selection Board and the proposal is being referred for approval to ACC. The names of all the part time Directors have also been identified and these have been recommended for approval of the Government. Fully constituted Board is expected to give better direction to the work in the NFDC.

The actual Plan performance of NFDC during the Ninth Five Year Plan upto 1999-2000 amounts to Rs. 1641.93 lakhs which accounts for 36.08% out of outlay of Rs. 4550.00 lakhs. However, as against the plan outlay for the first three years of Rs. 2300 lakhs, the performance amounts to 71 % of targeted outlay.

The Committee has observed that the major shortfalls are in crucial sectors like construction of theatres and import of films.

The target of construction of theatres has been adversely affected by the fact that small scale theatres in the past have not been commercially viable ventures.

Non-availability of land in big cities for building theatres therein is another factor impeding achievement of the target. It may also be mentioned here that the quantum of loan given by NFDC is very minimal and not in consonance with the increasing cost of theatre construction and equipment installed therein. Further, this is an area of activity which is financed by banks and State Film Development Corporations as well.

It is submitted that the Corporation will be taking action to modify the scheme of theatre finance in the light of the difficulties experienced by the applicants for loan and examining the possibility of accepting collateral security.

In so far as import of films is concerned, it may be stated that big budget English films are primarily produced and distributed by the members of the Motion Picture Association of America. NFDC's imports are confined to low-budget films which have limited avenues for release in theatres. Thus the area within which the NFDC is operating is limited. NFDC is supplying imported films to Doordarshan for telecast. However, this area of activity does require a fresh examination with a view to enhancing revenues and a review is being undertaken in the Corporation to this effect.

Regarding the export of films by NFDC, the observations of the Committee have been noted. The marketing strategies are being re-oriented and fresh markets are being explored. Appropriate measures will be taken to achieve the target of Rs. 150 lakhs during the year 2000-2001.

[M/O. I & B OM No. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

CHAPTER IV

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

Recommendation (Para No. 14)

The Committee is deeply distressed to note that the Prasar Bharati Board which is provided to consist of 15 members has not been constituted in its true sense. There are now only five members and three of them are functioning on part-time basis. The posts of Chairman and regular CEO of the Prasar Bharti Board are lying vacant since June, 1998 and Aug., 1998 respectively. The part time members have also not been appointed from May, 1998 and Nov., 1999. The Committee note that the posts of Member (Finance) and Member (Personnel) have also not been filled and the members representing employees who have to be elected by them have not been appointed since Nov., 1997. The callous attitude of Government in this regard is regrettable. The sudden removal of the two Members of the Board has been on totally inexplicable reason. The Committee hopes that filling up of the vacancies of the Board level as well as that of regular CEO would be given top priority and the full-fledged Board would be in position at the earliest. The reasoning that the posts of the two members removed recently were term appointments and have been retired under the system of the rotation on the basis of relative expertise is not convincing at all since the basis of the removal of the said two members has not been disclosed.

Action Taken by the Government

During last couple of years a number of vacancies have accumulated at the Board level in Prasar Bharati. The position of Chairman has fallen vacant due to the death of the previous incumbent, one member had resigned soon after his appointment and the position of Chief Executive has also been vacant. In addition, positions of two part-time members have fallen vacant in 1999 due to their vacation

of the positions when the legally maintained principle of rotation among part-time members was enforced. The positions of Member (Personnel) and Member (Finance) have not been filled up since inception of Prasar Bharati and positions of DG-Doordarshan and DG AIR have been vacant for some time now. Filling up of these positions by regular incumbents all at one go will create discontinuity in the management of Prasar Bharati which could have a bearing on smooth functioning in the Prasar Bharati. Therefore, the Government has decided to fill up these positions within next few months in two or three instalments. In the first instalment, positions of Member (Finance) and Member (Personnel) and the two DGs are proposed to be filled up soon. The Rules for recruitment to these positions have been drafted by the Prasar Bharati and they have been examined in the Ministry. Concurrence of Department of Personnel is being sought within next few days before they are notified. As soon as the Rules are notified, the Committee headed by the Vice President of India would be requested to consider selection out of the panels made available for the positions of Member (Personnel) and Member (Finance) by the Deptt. of Personnel already and Prasar Bharati would initiate process and selection to the posts of two DGs. Thus, while a large number of positions on the Prasar Bharati Board have been vacant in the past, the Government is now trying to fill these up expeditiously so that the Board can effectively supervise the functioning of Prasar Bharati.

So far as the retirement of two part-time members, namely Prof. Romilla Thapar and Shri Rajendra Yadav is concerned, it may be mentioned that this was a legal requirement as per sub-section (3) and (5) of section 6 of the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990 which provide as under:

- Section 6 (3): The term of office of the Part-time members shall be six years, but one-third of such Members shall retire on the expiration of every second year.
- Section 6 (5): As soon as may be after the establishment of the Corporation, the President of India may, by order, make such provision as he thinks fit for curtailing the term of office of some of the Part-time members then appointed in order that one-third of the members holding office as such part-time Members shall retire in every second year thereafter.

The opinion of the Attorney General was sought on the above provisions of the Act and on the issue whether curtailment of term of Part-time members

should be determined by draw of lots or by following some other criteria. The Attorney General advised that the retirement of 1/3rd of the part-time members on completion of every two years should be determined on the following criteria:

- (i) experience, expertise and background of the members;
- (ii) their contribution to the effective and harmonious working of the Board; and
- (iii) relative indispensability of part-time members at the present stage and the necessity of taking the benefit of their services by their retention for a further period of time.

Government after taking into consideration the above criteria advised by AG came to the conclusion that experience and expertise of Shri B.G. Verghese, Shri Abid Hussain and Prof. U.R. Rao is more directly related to the work in Prasar Bharati. Accordingly, Govt. came to the conclusion that Shri B.G. Verghese should have the full term of six years and shall retire on 22.11.2003, Prof. U.R. Rao and Dr. Abid Hussain each should be given a term of four years and that they shall retire on 22.11.2001. The remaining two part-time Members namely, Prof Romilla Thapar and Shri Rajendra Yadav should have the term of two years only and they stand retired w.e.f. 22.11.1999.

As is evident from the above, the Government, in order to discharge its legal obligations under the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990 had to retire two part-time members on 22.11.1999 and had to curtail the term of two other Part-time Members from six years to four years.

[M/O. I & B OM No. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 8 of Chapter - I).

Recommendation (Para No. 53)

The Committee observes with concern that the financial performance of DAVP was less than 50 percent during the first three years on the Ninth Plan. It could incur the expenditure of Rs.270.00 lakh (44.97 percent) out of

the outlay of Rs. 620.00 lakh. The Committee notes that DAVP has empanelled newspapers on the basis of circulation figures for the purpose of issuing advertisements. However, the Committee is at a loss to note that the Ministry has not formulated any guidelines to ascertain/verify the circulation figures claimed by newspapers. DAVP was dependent on the services of RNI, Audit Bureau of Circulation and Chartered Accountants in this regard. As such, the Committee observes that authenticity of circulation figures has been suspected by knowledgeable quarters at different points of time. The Committee feels that the Ministry did not pay any attention to the concern expressed by the Committee last year. The Committee therefore, reiterates that the Ministry should take urgent steps to formulate detailed policy and guidelines in this respect and create some reliable agency to ensure that no person is able to corner advertisement on the basis of false circulation figures.

Action Taken by the Government

It is submitted that the expenditure figure of Rs. 278.79 lakhs (and not Rs. 270.00 lakhs) was inadvertently wrongly reported upon, whereas the total expenditure incurred for the first three years of the Ninth Plan was Rs. 440.48 lakhs upto 31.03.2000 as against Rs. 441.00 lakhs Budget Grant for the first three years which shows nearly 100 per cent achievement both in terms of physical and financial targets.

The Registrar of Newspapers for India carries out verification of circulation claims of newspapers/periodicals under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 (as amended from time to time) by:

- Calling for the required documents from the publishers;
- Verifying original documents at the premises of the publications; and
- Conducting surprise spot checks.

Circulation verification is mainly carried out on the basis of documents/ records furnished by the publishers. In some serious cases, premises of the publishers are checked but owing to limited resources, spot checks are carried out only in a few cases.

The Ministry agrees that the arrangements for verifying claims for circulation submitted by the newspapers/journals is not satisfactory. This is mainly because the Registrar of Newspapers or even DAVP has very modest manpower whereas there are about 51,500 registered newspapers/journals in

the country. Therefore, mindful of the recommendation of the Committee, the Ministry has been considering, however, a better arrangement for checking claims of circulation can be instituted. The Ministry consulted the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC Ltd.), which verifies and certifies circulation for its members through an independent system. The verified figures of this organization are generally considered reliable. However, most of the small and medium newspapers are not members of this organization partly because of the membership fee. The Ministry also cannot force the newspapers to become members. The Ministry therefore, consulted the ABC whether it would undertake to take up verification of circulation of those newspapers which are not its members on assignment from the Ministry. The ABC Ltd. has declined to take up this work. Therefore, Ministry is working out now a set of criteria for verifying the circulation figures which would give a true picture of circulation claimed by individual newspapers. The intention is to operationalise the revised arrangement within next few months.

[M/O I & B OM NO. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 14 of Chapter I)

Recommendation (Para No. 68)

The Committee, however, takes a serious note of the fact that Doordarshan has not screened any documentary produced by the Films Division on the National Channel. Only a few documentaries have been screened at regional channels. The Films Division was set up with the specific purpose of producing documentaries and short films for public information, education and cultural development. The Division has been producing about 26 films each year in various languages besides Hindi. The Committee strongly recommends that good films produced by the Films Division, which give specific and acceptable message to the society be screened on the Doordarshan channels regularly, even if they are perceived to be not commercially viable. The Committee is of the view that the programmes on the National Channel should not be decided upon only on the basis of their commercial viability and the same should not be the only yardstick. Films produced by the Films Division, a unit of the Ministry should not be denied screening on the National Channel. Doordarshan is certainly expected to be self-sufficient financially and should be making adequate profits but there seems to an over-emphasis

on the commercial aspects, even ignoring the primary objectives of providing information and education apart from entertainment. The success of Doordarshan cannot be measured only by profit it earns but also to the extent it fulfills the national objectives. Competition with the private sector should be more on quality and intrinsic value of the programmes and not on the quantum of profit alone.

It is a matter of grave concern that many of the films have not been screened at all. The Committee would like to be apprised of those films and the steps being taken to screen them on Doordarshan and at Cinema Houses. The films produced by the Films Division, must get priority over programmes produced elsewhere.

Action Taken by the Government

It has been intimated by Prasar Bharati that Doordarshan telecasts the relevant documentaries of Films Division as per the requirement of each Doordarshan Channel. According to Prasar Bharati, most of the documentaries of Films Division are on the biography of eminent personalities and similar content is normally available with Doordarshan. Nevertheless, the material/ contents of Films Division are quite often made use of by Doordarshan, wherever necessary, while preparing their programmes.

In consultation with the representatives of Prasar Bharati, a decision has recently been taken that Doordarshan would provide fixed time slots on regional satellite channels for documentaries of Films Division on revenue sharing basis. Prasar Bharati has been advised to take necessary action in this regard in consultation with the Films Division.

[M/O I & B O.M. No. G.20016/2/2000-B & A dated 9.8.2000]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 17 of Chapter I)

CHAPTER V

**RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH
REPLIES ARE OF INTERIM NATURE**

NIL

NEW DELHI;
12 April, 2001

22 Chaitra, 1923 (Saka)

SOMNATH CHATTERJEE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on,
Information Technology.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2001)

The Committee sat on Thursday, 12 April, 2001 from 1100 hrs. to
1300 hrs. in Committee Room '53', Parliament House, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Somnath Chatterjee – *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Mahendra Baitha
3. Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal
4. Shri Nikhil Kumar Chaudhary
5. Shri T. Govindan
6. Shri K.K. Kaliappan
7. Shri G. Ram Mohan
8. Shri K.A. Sangtam
9. Sardar Buta Singh
10. Rajkumari Ratna Singh

Rajya Sabha

11. Shri Shatrughan Sinha
12. Shri Narendra Mohan
13. Shri Balbir K. Punj
14. Dr. Y. Radhakrishna Murthy
15. Shri P.N. Siva
16. Shri Kartar Singh Duggal
17. Shri K. Rama Mohana Rao
18. Shrimati Kum Kum Rai
19. Shri Rajiv Shukla

SECRETARIAT

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| 1. | Shri P.D.T. Achary | -- | <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 2. | Shri S.K. Sharma | -- | <i>Deputy Secretary</i> |
| 3. | Bhupesh Kumar | -- | <i>Assistant Director</i> |
| 2. | *** | *** | *** |
| 3. | *** | *** | *** |
| 4. | *** | *** | *** |

5. The Committee then took up for consideration the following Draft Reports and adopted the same with amendments/modifications as shown in Annexures A.

(i) Draft Twentieth Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology on Action taken by Government on the recommendations/ observations contained in its Eleventh Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on 'Demands for Grants (2000-2001)' relating to Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

| | | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (ii) | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| (iii) | *** | *** | *** | *** |

6. The Committee then authorized the Chairman to finalise the draft reports in the light of the factual verification received from the concerned Ministry/Department and present/lay the Reports in both the Houses of Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

ANNEXURE

MODIFICATIONS/AMENDMENTS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE IN
THE DRAFT TWENTIETH REPORT

| <i>Page No.</i> | <i>Para No.</i> | <i>Line No.</i> | <i>For</i> | <i>Read</i> |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 3 | 8 | 8 | "Significance" | "utmost importance" |
| 4 | 11 | 1 | <i>After</i> "various" <i>Add</i> "projects of" | |
| -do- | -do- | 2 | <i>Delete</i> "projects" | |
| -do- | -do- | 5-6 | "is not.....reason" | "finds itself unable to accept such excuses" |
| -do- | 11 | 5 | (from below) "lingering" | "pending" |
| -do- | -do- | 4 | (from below) "the declining..... reversed" | "comparatively more funds were available" |
| -do- | -do- | 3 | (from below) "will like" | "desires" |
| -do- | -do- | 2 | (from below) "strengthen" | "strictly" |
| -do- | -do- | 2 | (from below) <i>Delete</i> "Process" | |

APPENDIX II

(Vide Introduction of Report)

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN THE ELEVENTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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| I. | Total number of Recommendations/Observations | 23 |
| II. | Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government: Para Nos. 35, 36, 52, 56, 57, 67, 70, 71 and 79 | Total : 9 Percentage : 39% |
| III. | Recommendations/Observations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of the reply of the Government: Para Nos. 7, 15, 32, 33, 34, 50, 51, 54, 55, 66 and 69 | Total : 11 Percentage : 48% |
| IV. | Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration: Para Nos. 14, 53 and 68 | Total : 3 Percentage : 13% |
| V. | Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies are of interim nature: | Total : Nil |