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MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS—
TELECOMMUNICATIONS

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
1992-93

TENTH LOK SABHA



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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

**TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORT
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1992-93)**

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(TENTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**[Action Taken by Government on the recommendations
contained in the Fourth Report of
Estimates Committee]**



Presented to Lok Sabha on 31 March 1993

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES
(1992-93)

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**COMPOSITION OF SUB-COMMITTEE ON ACTION TAKEN
REPORTS OF ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1992-93)**

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2. **Shri A. Charles**
3. **Shri Sriballav Panigrahi**
4. **Shri Rupchand Pal**
5. **Smt. Girija Devi**
6. **Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait**
7. **Shri Rajendra Agnihotri**

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this 28th Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 4th Report of the Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications)—Telecommunications.

2. The 4th Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 11th December, 1992 and the Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in the Report on 9th October, 1992/11th December, 1992. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on 16th March, 1993. The Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

3. The Report has been divided in the following Chapters:—

I. Report.

II. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government.

III. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies.

IV. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.

V. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

4. An analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 4th Report of Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix. It would be observed that out of 48 recommendations made in the Report, 18 recommendations i.e., 37.5% have been accepted by the Government and the Committee do not desire to pursue 3 recommendations i.e., about 6.2% in view of Government's replies. Replies have not been accepted in respect of 14 recommendations i.e., about 29.2% and interim replies in respect of 13 recommendations i.e., 27.1% have been furnished by the Government.

NEW DELHI;
26th March, 1993

Chaitra 5, 1915(S)

MANORANJAN BHAKTA
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their 4th Report (10th Lok Sabha) on Ministry of Communications (Deptt. of Telecommunications)—Telecommunications.

2. The Committee's 4th Report (10th Lok Sabha) was presented to Lok Sabha on 11th December, 1991. It contained 48 recommendations and observations and action taken notes on all these recommendations were to be submitted to the Committee by 11th June, 1992. However, the Ministry of Communications (Deptt. of Telecommunications) submitted action taken notes on all the recommendations on 20th August, 1992/11th December, 1992.

3. The action taken notes have been categorised as follows:—

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

Sl. Nos. 1, 4, 16, 18, 19, 25, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46 and 48

(Total 18, Chapter II)

(ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:

Sl. Nos. 10, 32 and 39

(Total 3, Chapter III)

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

Sl. Nos. 2, 5, 6, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 36, 37, 41, 45 and 47

(Total 14, Chapter IV)

(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which interim replies have been furnished by the Government:

Sl. Nos. 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 29 and 43

(Total 13, Chapter V)

4. The Committee expect that final replies to the recommendations included in Chapter V and in respect of which only interim replies have been furnished will be submitted to them expeditiously.

All Nation connectivity
(Para No. 1.31-Sl. No. 1)

In paragraph 1.31 of their report the Committee had deprecated the fact that due weightage was not being assigned to the growth of telecom infrastructure in the country. They, therefore urged the Government to give high priority to this sector in the 8th and 9th Five Year Plans. The Committee also recommended that these two Plans should be formulated in such a manner so as to focus adequately on achieving an 'all-nation-connectivity' right down to the village level.

6. In their action taken notes dated 20th August, 1992 the Ministry of Communications (Deptt. of Telecommunications) have stated:

"The revised draft 8th plan proposals (92-97) as also the Perspective Plan 2000 AD were drawn up keeping in mind the role played by the telecommunications services for the development of the socio-economic activities of the nation. The outlay proposed was Rs. 40555 crores covering expansion and modernisation of the telecom services. A major thrust proposed was to achieve nation-wide connectivity of all subscribers. The plan *inter-alia* envisaged the following:

- Provide telephones practically on demand in rural and tribal areas.
- Waiting period for telephone connections not to exceed two years.
- Provide phone facility in all Gram Panchayats by 1.4.1995.
- Additional 1.5 lakh villages to have Long Distance Public Telephones by 1.4.1997.
- Public call offices for every 100 households in urban areas.
- Provide NSD facility to all exchanges by 1.4.1997.
- Subdivisional headquarters/tehsil headquarters or equivalent towns and all exchanges of size 500 lines or more to be covered by 1.4.1995 for NSD facility.
- All industrial growth centres, tourist and pilgrimage centres to be provided NSD facility by 1.4.95.
- Achieve fully automatic network by March 1994 by replacing all manual exchanges.
- Replace all strowger MAX-III exchanges by electronic exchanges (as part of the programme to provide NSD to all exchanges).
- Replace life expired and worn out switches as and when they become life expired.
- Delivery of 98% of booked telegrams within 12 hours and 100% within 24 hours.
- Bureaufax centres at subdivisional/tehsil headquarters or equivalent towns.

Noting the observations of the Estimates Committee the Planning Commission have conveyed that Telecommunication is envisaged to be one of the priority areas and would receive full encouragement from the Commission.

However, NDC has approved an outlay of only about Rs. 24000 crores for Telecom Services. Attempt is being made to generate more resources by tapping other alternative means so as to achieve the physical targets proposed in the 8th plan document."

7. The Committee note that the revised draft Eighth Plan proposals (1992-97) as also the Perspective Plan 2000 AD were drawn up by the Department of Telecommunications keeping in mind the role played by the telecommunication services for the development of socio-economic activities in the nation and the outlay proposed was Rs. 40555 crores covering expansion and modernisation of the telecom services. However, National Development Council has approved an outlay of only about Rs. 24000 crores for these services. Keeping in view the position that the Department of Telecommunications is a revenue earning department, the Committee desire the Government to reconsider higher allocation of resources. In this regard the Ministry of Communications have stated that 'attempt is being made to generate more resources by tapping other alternative means so as to achieve the physical targets proposed in the Eighth Plan Document'. The Committee would like to know the details and the manner in which other alternative means are proposed to be tapped for generating financial resources for the Eighth Plan.

**Placing the Telecommunications Policy before Parliament
(Para No. 1.32 Sl. No. 2)**

8. Concluding that the telecommunication by itself is an extensive and self-contained field which require a treatment independent of other modes of communication, the Committee had recommended that necessary linkages between Department of Telecommunications and other communication agencies should appropriately be reflected in the Telecommunications Policy. The Committee had also recommended that a formal policy Document on telecommunication should be adopted without any further delay and placed before the House.

9. In their action taken note dated 24th August, 1992, the Department of Telecommunications have stated as under:

"A draft 'Telecommunications Policy' has been prepared taking into consideration the views expressed by other communication agencies, industry and business community etc. The comments of the various Ministries have been called for on the draft 'Telecommunications Policy' so prepared before seeking approval of the Cabinet."

10. The Committee deprecate the inordinate delay in finalisation of Telecommunications Policy.

They feel that due seriousness is not being accorded to this matter by the Government and wonder how, in absence of a cogent policy document, the Eighth Five Year Plan on Telecommunication has been formulated. The Committee therefore desire that inter-ministerial consultation on draft policy document may be expedited and the approval of the Cabinet obtained at an early date. They also desire that the contents of the draft policy be made available to the Committee as soon as approved by the Cabinet. They reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Telecommunication Policy, after getting it approved by the Cabinet, should be placed before the Parliament without further loss of time, to facilitate a wide debate on the matter.

**Constant review of the Indian Telegraph Act
(Para 1.33 Sl.No. 3)**

11. The Committee had, in paragraph 1.33 of their Report, *inter-alia*, recommended that the Indian Telegraph Act should be kept under constant review and modified as and when changes in the technology, expansion of the telecom network and introduction of new services so warrant. They also advised the Department to review the Act from a futuristic perspective so that it continues to remain an instrument of growth and is not permitted to become an impediment at any stage.

12. In their action taken note dated 20th August, 1992 the Department of Telecommunications have informed the Committee that a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri D.N. Nanda, retired member (Production), Telecommunication Commission has been appointed to comprehensively review the Indian Telegraph Act and suggest changes where necessary.

13. The Committee would like to know whether the Committee appointed under the chairmanship of Shri Nanda has since reviewed the Indian Telegraph Act comprehensively and submitted its Report to the Government. The findings/recommendations of this Committee and action taken by the Government on these recommendations should be communicated to the Committee at an early date.

Training of the Officers & Staff

(Paras 1.34 & 1.35 Sl. No. 4)

14. Expressing their concern about absence of allocation of commensurate funds for the purpose of training of staff with reference to rapid expansion in the area of telecommunication and introduction of modern technology in the field, the Committee recommended that sufficient funds should be earmarked for the purpose of training and for other Human Resource Development objectives/requirements. Keeping in view the widely perceived state of continued telephone faults, they had also come to the conclusion that the technicians employed to man the equipment in the exchanges as also the telephone instruments are not attitudinally trained to

perform at an optimum level of efficiency and courtesy. The Committee had therefore desired the Department to strengthen its training programme so as to emphasize the attitudinal changes required amongst the officers and staff of the Telecom Department to help them to be sufficiently motivated to attend to the subscribers' problems which include acute difficulties faced by them regarding fault repairs, trunk bookings, directory enquiry, etc. with promptness and courtesy.

15. In their action taken note dated 20th August, 1992, the Ministry of Communications have stated:

"Keeping in view the changing technological scenario in the field of telecommunications and future requirement of managing the telecom systems involving complexity of high technology and new skills of management, a new training strategy for training the personnel of the Department of Telecom has been formulated and being implemented through the 38 training centres all over the country. The training strategy consists of imparting three types of training.

(I) INDUCTION TRAINING

(a) All the officers and staff of the Department of Telecommunication are given induction training on their first appointment, recently the induction training programmes of ITS Group 'A' probationers and Junior Telecom Officers have been redesignated to meet the high-tech requirements viz. E10B, C-DOT, ILT, Digital Transmission System, Satellite Communications, Data Communications and Optical Fibre System etc.

(b) To meet the changing needs of telecom technologies Group C & D cadres have been restructured as Phone Mechanic, Telecom Technical Assistant and Senior Telecom Operation Assistant and are being imparted induction training in the high-tech systems and computerization. The total strength of such cadres requiring the induction training is about 60,000 and we have set up training capacity of 12,000 per annum to complete this task in five years period.

(II) REFRESHER TRAINING

In addition to induction training, the need based training programmes are implemented to equip the officials to handle new technology viz. E10B, C-DOT, Optical Fibre, Digital Microwave, MARR and C-DOT Systems. Adequate training capacities have been built up to meet these requirements and also to ensure that every official is given training once in five years time. During the 1991-92 period about 21,000 officials were given refresher training.

(III) MANAGEMENT/ATTITUDINAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Department of Telecommunications attaches great importance for development of management/attitudinal skills in the staff. The Group 'A' officers of the Dept. are given obligatory management training during their service period. These stages are Stage-I (4-9 years), Stage-II (10-16 years) and Stage-III (17-21 years). The Group 'B' officers of the department are given obligatory 2 weeks management orientation programme.

The attitudinal development courses on subjects like 'Customer Relations, Public Relations, A Good Telephone Operator, Linemen and Public' etc. are conducted for the lower cadres of the department. During the year 1991-92, 21632 personnel have been given these attitudinal development training."

16. The Committee also note that proposed expenditure on Telephone Training during the 8th Plan period (1992-97) is Rs. 214.5 crores against an expenditure of Rs. 160 crores during the last five year. Further, the budget provisions, under the Telecom Training, made during the last three years are as under.

Revenue for Major Head 3225 (Rupees in thousands)

	1990-91 Actual	1991-92 RE	1992-93 BE
(A)- B-1(1) Operation Training	1,36,06	1,45,40	1,58,10
(B) E-1 Engg. Training	16,65,04	20,78,87	34,96,30
(C) E-4(6) Petty Works	5,87,71	4,30,58	4,49,58
Capital Major Head 5225			
Training Centres BB-5 (2) (1)	7,67,58	8,91,40	12,73,85
Grand Total on Training:	31,56,39	35,46,25	53,77,83
Gross Budget:	64962600	68674600	93034800
% On G/Budget:	.49%	.52%	.58%

17. The Committee note that keeping in view the changing technological scenario in the field of telecommunications and future requirement of managing the telecommunication systems involving complexity of high technology and new skills of management, a new training strategy for the personnel of the Department of Telecom has been formulated and being implemented through 38 training centres all over the country.

18. However, the Committee are constrained to note that out of Rs.120.80 crores spent during the period from 1990-91 to 1992-93, only Rs.4.39 crores have been spent on Operational Training and Rs. 72.40 crores spent on Engineering Training. An off shoot of this situation is that about 60000 officials of Group C&D Cadres still require Inductional Training. The Committee feel that this is a matter of serious concern and, therefore, recommend that more funds should be allotted for training purposes. They also desire that Deptt. should start more training centres so that persons recruited are given training in the first year of their recruitment. They wish to reiterate the importance of imparting attitudinal training to operational staff at the induction stage itself.

Fixation of Realistic Targets
(Para Nos. 2.42 and 2.43 - Sl.Nos. 5 & 6)

19. Deprecating the conscious non-correlation of physical targets with Plan allocation and consequential fixation of unrealistic targets of LDPTs, the Committee had, in paragraph 2.42 of their report, recommended:-

“In their Sixty-ninth Report (8th Lok Sabha) on Telecommunication Services in the Rural areas, the Estimates Committee had deprecated the conscious non-correlation of physical targets with plan allocations and consequential fixation of unrealistic targets. The Committee are constrained to note that notwithstanding the recommendations of its predecessor committee the Department of Telecommunications have failed to bring in the required degree of realistic planning and expansion of Telecom Services. Even during the 7th Plan the target for LDPTs had to be brought down from original level of 15,000 to 9,720 due to difficulties in the supply of equipment. Obviously, such drastic scaling down of targets could have been avoided had equipment supply position been assessed realistically.”

20. The Ministry of Communications have in their action taken note dated 20.8.1992 stated in this regard:-

“The Department has endeavoured a conscious correlation of physical targets with Plan allocations and consequential fixation of realistic targets. During 1991-92, a target of covering 12,000 Panchayat Villages with telephone facility was fixed against which 21,752 Panchayat Villages were provided with telephone facility. Similarly in the year 1992-93, a target of covering 36,500 Panchayat Villages has been fixed, which is commensurate with annual Plan allocation of Rs. 456 crores and expected availability of equipments.”

21. Further, the Committee in para 2.43 of the Report expressed concern to note that even though 14 firms in private and public sector were given licences for production of various types of equipments required for providing LDPTs, actually only one company has succeeded in production. They had therefore emphasised the need for formulating the realistic plans,

fixing targets within an achievable range and vigorous action for successful implementation of such plans. The Committee had also urged that shortfall in meeting the requirements under various components of the plan i.e., Coaxial Cables, Microwave and UBF Systems and Optical Fibre etc. should be fully met during the 8th Plan. They had also desired ensure that production of equipments for which licences have already been granted to public and private firms should be started expeditiously.

22. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992, the Ministry of Communications have stated as under:-

"Under the new industrial policy announced by the Govt. in July 91, production of all types of telecommunication equipment have been delicensed. Telecom equipment have also been included in the list of priority industries for automatic approval of foreign technology agreements involving foreign equity upto 51% and technology payments upto Rs. 1 crore. With the introduction of this policy a number of new production units are expected to be set up during the 8th Plan period. The production group set up under the Telecom Commission is also closely monitoring various purchase for which licences were earlier issued as well as new purchase proposed under the liberal industrial policy. With these measures it is expected that the requirements of various types of telecommunication equipments will be met during the 8th Plan period."

23. From the information furnished by the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) the Committee note that during the 7th Plan, 9720 LDPTs could be installed against the plan target of 15,000 LDPTs whereas 21,752 panchayat villages were provided with telephone facilities against the target of covering 12,000 panchayat villages during 1991-92. This is clearly an indication of faulty planning in the Department. The Committee are unhappy on the conscious non-correlation of physical targets with plan allocations. The Committee desire the Government to fix targets commensurate with annual plan allocations and expected availability of the required equipments.

24. The Committee are further dismayed to note that the Ministry of Communications did not indicate any specific action taken or reply to Committee's recommendation regarding ensuring production in all the 14 firms, in private and public sector, which were given licenses for production of various types of equipments required for providing LDPTs. The Committee take a serious view of this reticence on the part of the Ministry and desire to know whether all these 14 firms have started production, and if not, they should be informed of the latest position in this regard.

Full Utilisation of Production Capacity of Telephone Instruments
(Para No. 3.59, Sl. No. 20)

25. As only 10 lakh telephone instruments were being produced against the installed capacity of 40 lakh instruments, the Committee had, in paragraph 3.59 of their Report, desired the Government to launch a concerted drive for export of telephone instruments and hoped that the Department would maintain the highest quality and standards of instruments being so manufactured so that the complaints on this account are minimised.

26. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992, the Department of Telecommunications have stated:

“The Department of Telecom has set up a steering committee to promote export of Telecom equipment including instruments and services. The exports of telephone instrument in 91-92 has been to the tune of Rs. 5.79 crores. All telephone instruments procured by the Department are subjected to quality assurance tests and accepted only when they meet the quality standards.”

27. The Committee are not satisfied with the present level of exports of telephone instruments which was of the tune of Rs. 5.79 crores during 1991-92. They desire that the Department of Telecommunications should ensure full utilisation of licensed capacity of telephone instruments in the country and at the same time expect the Government to make more concerted efforts to promote export of Telecom instruments. The efforts made and the progress achieved should be intimated to the Committee and also reflected in their future Annual Report.

Development of Telecom Sector
(Para No. 3.60, Sl. No. 21)

28. Keeping in view that a number of companies who were issued licences for manufacture of Payphones, Cordless Telephone and FAX Machines, have yet to start production, the Committee had, in paragraph 3,60 of their Report, desired the Department of Telephones to take upon itself the role of nurturing and fledgeling units so that they are able to contribute in not only developing the Telecom Sector but also in optimal utilisation of nation's resources.

29. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992, the Department of Telecommunications have stated that “all out efforts are being made to develop vendors for supply of Department of Telecom or users' equipments required for telecommunications”.

30. The Committee are not satisfied with the vague reply of the Government. They would like the Department of Telecommunications to intimate the specific efforts made by the Department for developing the market as well as production of Payphones, Cordless Telephones and FAX

Machines etc. so that the manufacturers who have yet to start their production may be encouraged to invest in this field. The detailed efforts made in this regard should be intimated in detail to the Committee at an early date.

Production of Equipments with imported technology

(Para 3.61, Sl. No. 22)

31. Expressing their displeasure for keeping the proposal for manufacture of digital UHF equipment with imported technology under their consideration since 1985 and ultimately dropping the proposal, the Committee had, in para 3.61 of their Report, desired that in future such proposals should be mooted in tune with reasonable long perspective and decisions taken quickly.

32. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992, the Department of Telecommunications have stated that 'with the recent changes in the industrial policy foreign collaboration have been permitted with the automatic approval procedures. With this change it is expected that telecom transmission equipment with state of the art technology will become available to the Department for meeting the rapidly changing requirements of telecom users.'

33. The Committee would like to know the number of proposals received by the Ministry of Communications after the introduction of new industrial policy from foreign collaborators for production of telecom transmission equipments with state-of-art technology.

Requirement of Electronic Switching System and Telephones Cables (Paragraphs 3.62 & 3.63, Sl. Nos. 23 & 24)

34. The Committee had in Paragraphs 3.62 and 3.63 of their Report recommended:

"The Committee note that production capacities of ITI units at Mankapur and Palghat are being upgraded to meet the requirement of electronic switching system. They, however, note that there will be still a gap left between demand and supply which will be met through private manufacturers. The Committee are seriously concerned to note shortages of large switching systems which have hindered expansion and modernisation of Telecom services in larger urban centres thus depriving the department of much needed revenue. The Committee understand that indigenous technology for manufacture of larger switching system has not been developing as fast as could be desired and that the Government proposes to fill the gap by relying on French C/T ALCATEL product for sometime. The Committee recommend that delay in expansion of services should not be allowed to come in the way of expansion and modernising telecom services in larger urban areas of substantial revenue potential.

The Committee also note that at present the annual licence capacity for manufacture of cables by HCL (Hindustan Cables Limited) is just a little above the 50% of the actual annual requirement of the Department. The Committee would like to caution the Government about the likely gap between availability of switching and transmission equipment which can make targets for the 8th Five Year Plan unrealisable. The Committee, therefore, recommend that sufficient attention should be paid towards dovetailing the production capacities of switching systems and the telephone cables in terms of quantities as well as technological capability."

35. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992 the Department of Telecommunications have informed the Committee as under:—

"DOT has drawn detailed plans for meeting the likely gap between availability of switching and transmission equipment for the 8th Five Year Plan. A number of large international companies have indicated their desire for setting up of production facilities for large switching equipment in view of the liberal industrial policy announced by the Govt. in July, 1991. Four proposals, namely, M/s. Ericsson, M/s Fujitsu, M/s Alcatel and M/s Siemens are in advanced stage of finalisation for switching production units. In the areas of transmission equipment, technologies developed by C-DOT are being transferred to a number of Indian companies for productionisation. In addition, some of the international companies are also expected to set up manufacturing facilities for transmission equipment. With the materialisation of these plans, it is expected that the gap in the supply of transmission and switching equipment during the 8th Plan period will be met.

Production capacities in the area of telephone cables existing with HCL (Hindustan Cables Ltd.) as well as other manufacturers both in the public and private sectors are sufficient to meet the requirements of DOT for the 8th Plan. In regard to switching capacities, action is already in hand to increase the production capacity for meeting the requirements of the 8th Plan. A number of proposals received from large international companies are in advanced stage of finalisation. Most of the new units being set up for manufacture of large switching systems are likely to produce switching equipment having latest technological capabilities. Department is paying sufficient attention towards dovetailing the production capacities of switching systems, transmission systems and telecommunication cables for meeting the 8th Five Year Plan requirements both in terms of quantities as well as in terms of technological capabilities."

36. From the reply of the Ministry, of Communications, the Committee note that a number of international companies have indicated their desire for setting up of production facilities for switching equipment having latest

technological capabilities. The Committee would like to know whether any of the proposals made by these firms have been finalised and, if so, the details thereof may be submitted to them immediately.

37. In regard to production capacities in the area of telephone cables, the Ministry have informed the Committee that the existing firms/manufacturers both in the public and private sectors are in a position to meet the requirements of DOT for the 8th Plan. The Committee would like to have a firm assurance from the Government that 8th Plan targets fixed by the Department would not be hampered due to shortage of telephone cables and switching and transmission equipments.

Building up of Adequate Research and Development Facilities
(Paras 3.65 and 3.66, Sl. Nos. 26 and 27)

38. Emphasising the importance of building up of adequate Research and Development facilities in order to achieve self-sufficiency in the field of Telecommunications, the Committee in Paragraphs 3.65 and 3.66 of their Report had stated:

“To achieve self-sufficiency in the field of Telecommunication building up of adequate Research and Development facilities is of paramount importance. The Committee are, however, constrained to note that the present R&D facilities in the telecom sector are not adequate for the current needs despite the fact that there is no shortage of funds. The Department has stated that there is an acute shortage in the availability of indigenously produced electronic components of professional grade. LSI and VLSI chips required for modern telecom designs are also stated to be not available in the country.

The Committee strongly recommend that the Research and Development setup in the Department of Telecommunication should be strengthened to enable the Department to not only develop and update indigenous technology but also to accept and absorb latest foreign technology. The Committee also desire the Department to lend full financial and administrative support to R&D Units so as to be able to develop in the country a strong technological base in the field of Telecommunications.”

39. In their Reply dated 20th August, 1992, the Department of Telecommunications have stated:

“The Research and Development activities of the Telecommunication Sector are carried out through the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), R&D wings of manufacturing agencies such as ITI, BEL, etc. and standardisation and type approval being carried out by the Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC). C-DOT, an autonomous organisation, is funded at present out of telecom

revenues and so far a sum of Rs. 105/- crores has been made available to them for their various activities.

The major achievements of C-DOT are:

1. An excellent R&D infrastructure and trained manpower to take up design of advanced digital switching systems.
2. Creation of large indigenous base for production.
3. 128 Port Rural Automatic Exchanges—About 5,000 such exchanges are operational in the country.
4. 512 Port Single Base Module Exchanges—Over 75 exchanges are operational in DOT Network.
5. 10,000 lines MAX Exchange—Three such exchanges are operational in DOT Network.

The new industrial policy has opened up tremendous opportunities for foreign investments and joint collaborations in the field of telecommunications. The responses are encouraging. It is expected that the availability of latest state-of-the-art technology will be possible within the country to meet its demand."

40. From the reply furnished by the Department of Telecommunications, the Committee find that a sum of Rs. 105 crores has been spent for carrying out the research and development activities of the telecommunication sectors through the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), ITI, BEL etc. The Committee are concerned to note that the issue of further strengthening research and development activities has been skirted. There is also no evidence of enhanced support to C-DOT. Whereas, the Department are very optimistic in regard to foreign investments and joint collaborations in the field of telecommunications, the Committee desire that Foreign Direct Investment should not result in smothering indigenous R&D effort as they apprehend that the foreign investors may not be interested in promoting Research and Development in India. The Committee would, therefore, like to have an assurance from the Government that the foreign investors will, apart from bringing their latest technology in the country, also spur R&D in Indian Telecom. Sector.

Functioning of Public Call Offices and Rural Telecom (Para 4.17, Sl. No. 28)

41. Expressing their concern over the actual functioning of Public Call Offices, the Committee had in para 4.17 of their Report *inter-alia* recommended:

"The Committee are constrained to say that the actual functioning of PCOs is far from satisfactory and would, therefore, desire that the Department should effectively monitor the functioning of PCOs. They also recommend expeditious introduction of latest equipment

for improving the performance of PCOs. The Committee would expect the Government to draw a perspective plan in this regard with special focus on promoting rural telecommunications. The Committee find that for achieving the desired level of connectivity, difficulties are being faced by DOT in regard to rural radio solution. The Committee desire that the Department should strive to overcome these difficulties to achieve visible results and make a speedy headway in this direction under a time-bound programme."

42. The Department of Telecommunications in their reply dated 20th August, 1992 have stated as under:—

"Detailed instructions have been issued for monitoring the functioning of PCOs. Since the number of rural installations consisting of Telephone Exchanges and Public Telephones is very large, the concept of decentralised monitoring has been adopted. As per the instructions, the monitoring is being done at various levels, beginning at the lowest level of Junior Telecom Officers/Technicians. Exception reports are to follow upwards for faults and their clearance. Finally, exceptionally delayed cases are to get reported to the Telecom Commission Headquarters.

For further promotion of Rural Telecommunication, the Department has drawn up specific programme to first cover all Panchayat villages with telephone facilities by March, 1997 and then extend the telephone facility to other villages progressively. Use of modern technology equipment such as Multi Access Rural Radio systems and single channel VHF systems which have now become indigenously available, has been emphasized."

43. The Committee find that in spite of issuing detailed instructions for monitoring the functioning of Public Call Offices, the actual performance of these Public Call Offices is far from satisfactory. They need to hardly emphasise that the Department should try to achieve zero fault level objective of functioning of the PCOs round the clock for which the Department should take appropriate technological, organisational and administrative measures.

44. The Committee hope that the programme of rural telecommunications *viz.* covering all panchayat villages with telephone facilities by March, 1997 would be completed in time by using modern technology equipments.

Setting up of Rural Telecom Corporations (Para 4.18, Sl. No. 29)

45. Welcoming the idea of setting up of Rural Telecom Corporations for rapid expansion of telecom services in rural areas to mitigate the problem of resource mobilisation for the purpose of promoting rural telecommunications, the Committee had, in para 4.18 of the Report, urged the Government to carefully study the pros and cons of the suggestion.

46. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992, the Department of Telecommunications have stated that the 'Rural Telecom Corporation' has been under consideration with a view to achieving rapid expansion of Telecom services in rural areas and generating required resources for this Sector. In the meantime, the Department has proposed to set up a "Telecom Finance Corporation" to help in raising resources for the entire Telecom Sector including Rural areas.

47. The Committee are constrained to observe that the exact position in regard to setting up of Rural Telecom Corporations has not been explained as also whether the idea has been given up in preference to a Telecom Finance Corporation. They desire that complete picture be placed before the Committee.

The Committee would also like to know the latest position for setting up of Telecom Finance Corporation. They further desire to know how, in the proposed Corporation, it would be ensured that the objective of expansion of telecom services in rural areas would be protected.

Recovery of the Outstanding Bills from Dignitaries/Government Departments

(Paragraphs 5.30 and 5.31, Sl. Nos. 36 and 37)

48. Calling for exploration of the possibility of obtaining advance deposits from Government Offices and other large Corporate Bodies as also from the dignitaries on the basis of reasonable average of billing made over the past period, the Committee had, in Paragraphs 5.30 and 5.31 of the Report stated:

"The Department informed the Committee that an amount of Rs. 82.36 crores billed upto 31st March, 1989 was outstanding from the subscribers. The Committee are of the view that even though the outstanding bills constitute only 3% of the total amount billed, these are nevertheless of considerable magnitude considering the fact that outstanding bills in respect of MTNL at Delhi and Bombay have not been taken into account. In this context the Committee are constrained to find that Department is facing problems in recovering the outstanding bills particularly in respect of dignitaries, Government Departments and on account of disputed cases pending in the courts and consumer councils. The Department has expressed its helplessness in making a headway in respect of outstanding bills relating to these categories.

The Committee have no reasons to agree with the contention of the Department of Telecommunications that they are not in a position to disconnect the telephones of Government Department which are not paying their due. The Committee feel that a commercial Department like that of telephones cannot be faulted if they are constrained to disconnect even Government telephones for which bills

are not being paid. The Committee would like the Department of Telecommunications to vigorously pursue cases of outstanding bills with Government department concerned at a high level with a view to realising telephone dues as early as possible. To overcome this situation the Committee would like the Department to consider the feasibility of pruning down the list of dignitaries from the exempted list for disconnection of telephones for non-payment of dues. At the same time the Committee would like the Department to explore the possibility of obtaining advance, deposit from Government offices and other large corporate bodies as also from the dignitaries on the basis of reasonable average of billing made over a past period. The actual charges can then be adjusted against such an advance. This the Committee believe, will also obviate the need for arm twisting for enforcing recovery of outstanding dues."

49. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992, the Department of Telecommunications have informed the Committee as under:—

"The Department is making all out efforts to reduce the outstanding by issuing instructions, granting incentive to the staff who put the extra efforts to recover the old outstanding, as a result, the outstanding as on 31.3.91 for the bills issued upto 31st March, 1989 has been drastically reduced to Rs. 41.51 crores for Department of Telecom. only and Rs. 74.40 crores including M.T.N.L.

As regards recovery of the dues from the dignitaries/Government Departments, it may be added that many of the dignitaries find place in the list of telephones exempted for disconnection and the telephones of the Govt. departments which are engaged in maintaining law and order and essential services are also not disconnected. This slows down the process of recoveries. However, efforts are made continuously to pursue these cases and concerned Government Departments by taking up the matter at higher levels. The settlement of the outstanding dues, lying in disputed cases in courts and consumer councils, depend upon the decisions of these courts/consumer councils.

Instructions for grant of incentive for recovery of old telephone revenue dues, against closed connections has also been issued vide No. 2-44/85-TR on 24.9.1990. In addition to the issue of instructions, the recovery of outstanding dues is also reviewed/watched through Sub-Ledger Review Statement received from each unit every month.

To pursue the cases of outstanding bills with Government Department concerned at high level vigorously, and to realise telephone dues as early as possible, all the Heads of Circles have been advised vide this office letter No. 23-93/91-TR dated 13.2.1992, in this respect.

As regards considering of pruning down the list of dignitaries from exempted list for disconnection of telephones for non-payment of

telephone dues, it is stated that the Department considers the dignitaries proposed for inclusion in the exempted category after detailed examination of the essentiality. The factors such as status of the official & Administrative functions etc., are also seen before considering the official for inclusion in the exempted category. Further the table of Rank & Precedence approved by the President of India is also referred to. At present there are only 34 dignitaries in the list. This may be seen from the list that dignitaries holding high rank/holding judicial powers, performing the administrative important functions are only included in the List. However the Committee's suggestion will be kept in view while considering fresh proposals for inclusion in the exempted list for disconnection in future. Further the procedure for follow up action on exempted category telephones has already been prescribed in para-186 of Telecommunications Manual Volume XIV. As per the procedure, the written reminders are issued to the paying officer regularly every month. The position is reviewed every quarter & quarterly list of bills of each telephone is sent to the paying officer with a special request for expeditious settlement. At the same time the matter is brought to the personal notice of the PS to the V.I.P. for whom the telephone is working.

As regards obtaining the advance deposits from Government offices with a view to obviate enforcing recovery of outstanding dues, the Govt. Departments may avail the facility of Voluntary Deposit Scheme which is already in practice, under which subscriber (including Government subscriber) may make sufficient advance to the Department adjustable in ensuing bills [para No. 215-B(3) of Telecommunication Manual, Vol. XIV, Pt-I]. In addition to the above scheme, A.O.(TR) is vested with powers to call for the Security Deposites of such amounts as he may consider necessary from the existing defaulting subscribers. Such deposits collected be refunded if the A.O.(TR) is satisfied about paying habits or financial soundness after 3 years. [Para 215-B(5) *ibid*].

*Copies of the following instructions are enclosed for reference.

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. | No. 23-93/9-TR dated
13-2-1992 | Liquidation of arrears of telephone dues against Government Departments. |
| 2. | 2-2/89-TR dated 1-3-1989 | List of telephones exempted from disconnection for non-payment of dues." |

50. The Committee are concerned to note that Rs. 115.9 crores were outstanding as on 31st March, 1991 for the telephone bills issued upto 31st March, 1989. The Committee apprehend that the position would be still

* See Chapter IV

worse if the outstanding bills are included for the subsequent period upto 31.12.1992. To overcome this situation, the Committee would like the Department to explore the possibilities of obtaining advance deposits from government offices, other corporate bodies as also from the dignitaries who had been defaulters on the-basis of reasonable average of billing made over the past period. At the same time, the Committee desire the Department to take up this issue with the dignitaries at G.M. level in addition to pruning down the list of these dignitaries from the exempted list for disconnection of telephones for non-payment of dues.

Expeditious Disposal of Cases Pending in Courts (Paragraph 5.32, Sl. No. 38)

51. As regards outstanding bills disputed by the subscribers and pending in Courts and Consumer Councils, the Committee had in Paragraph 5.32 of their Report expressed their opinion that for expeditious disposal of such cases the Department should encourage using the Instrument of Telephone Adalats. In this connection, the Department of Telecommunications has stated as under:—

“A letter has been issued to the field Units of Department of Telecom, reiterating the existing instructions on Telephone Adalats. The field units have also been asked to apprise the Court/Consumer Councils of the existence, functions and scope of the Telephone Adalats so that the Courts etc. may consider and refer the cases, pending before them, to the Telephone Adalats for expeditious disposal.”

52. From the reply given by the Department of Telecommunications, the Committee find that a letter has been issued to the field units of the Department of Telecommunications asking them to apprise the courts/consumer councils of the existence, functions and scope of the Telephone Adalats so that the respective courts etc. may consider and refer the cases pending before them to the Telephone Adalats for expeditious disposal. The Committee would like to know the number of cases transferred to the Telephone Adalats after the issuance of the above letter.

Consumer's Satisfaction (Paragraph 6.19, Sl. No. 41)

53. Stressing for the imperative need to provide operational satisfaction to consumers, the Committee had in Paragraph 6.19 of their Report recommended:

“The Committee are of the firm view that as a service industry, it is incumbent upon Department of Telecommunications (DOT) to provide maximum consumer satisfaction to its subscribers, whether it is in billing, faultrepair or prevention of misuse of STD. They wish to emphasise the point that the Department being a supplier in a service industry, the evident dissatisfaction between the Depart-

ment and the subscribers indicates that the service being provided is not satisfactory. *The Committee, therefore, reiterate that it is imperative to provide operational satisfaction to consumers and Department of Telecommunication must gear itself to achieve this goal optimally.*

54. The Department of Telecommunications in their Note dated 20th August, 1992 stated as under:

"The customer dissatisfaction as reflected by the complaints received mainly relate to:

- i) Fault Repair Service
- ii) Billing Complaints
- iii) Non-availability of service in rural areas.

As regards fault repair service, the aim of the Department is to achieve a figure of 90% in the restoration of faults within 24 hours. Sometimes it may not be possible mainly because of faults caused to underground cables through digging of the roads by other utility services, restoration of which takes a long time. The Department has a scheme of laying maximum number of cables inducts which are less prone to faults through digging.

As regards excess billing complaints, in all the electronic exchanges detailed billing particulars of STD calls are given to subscribers so that they are in a position to check the correctness of the bills. In addition in E-10B type electronic exchanges which have been introduced in a large scale, the subscribers are given the facility to control the STD calls through the dynamic locking facility. This prevents the possibility of anyone making STD calls without providing the secret pass word which is known only to the subscriber.

As regards complaints in rural areas, the problem is more complex since the Department is totally dependent on power supply from the State Electricity Supply Authorities. Prolonged interruptions in power supply and poor voltage regulation which take place quite regularly in rural areas cause disruption to telecom services. Though the Department provides standby power supply through battery sets, these can take care of interruptions only upto about 6 hours. Some experiments in the use of solar power are being carried out. Nevertheless, endeavour is being made consistent with financial resources available to improve the quality of service in rural areas by large scale induction of electronic exchanges, provision of long distance public call offices and trunk circuits through Radio systems which are highly reliable compared to open wire lines which are subject to interruptions in bad weather, thefts etc.

To sum up, it may be seen that it has been the endeavour of the Department to improve the services. Significant improvement in the quality of service has been achieved, through introduction of electronic exchanges which are highly reliable and also through replacement of trunk circuits on reliable media like Microwave, Optical Fibre etc. Internal

Monitoring of the quality of service is done through monthly reports on all parameters included in the Mission's Better Communications which was launched in the year, 1986. This is continuing. In addition to this, the Department also has a system of assessing the quality of service provided to subscribers from the point of view of the user. This appraisal is carried out by an independent agency (earlier it was done by the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad and is now being done by Indian Market Research Bureau) and this covers 48 important cities in the country which constitute about 70% of the equipped capacity."

55. The Committee note that the consumer dissatisfaction reflected by the complaints received by the Department of Telecommunications mainly relates to:

- i) Fault repairs
- ii) Billing complaints
- iii) Non-availability of service in rural areas.

The Department of Telecommunications have themselves admitted that non-availability of telephone service in rural areas is more complex matter as the Department is totally dependent on the State Electricity Supply Authorities and prolonged interruption in power supply and power voltage regulation taking place quite regularly in rural areas cause disruption in telecom service. The Committee desire the Department to take up this matter with the State Government concerned at regular intervals and should also explore the feasibility of harnessing solar power or using battery for rural telephone exchanges.

56. The Committee have also been informed that the Department has been doing internal monitoring of the quality of service through monthly reports on all parameters since 1986. The Department also has a system of assessing quality of services provided to the subscribers from the point of view of the user, and this appraisal is carried out by an independent agency, earlier by Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad and now by Indian Market Research Bureau. The Committee desire that the appraisal Reports for the last 3 years may be submitted to them.

57. The Committee need hardly emphasise that in view of widespread dissatisfaction in the consumers in regard to telephone service particularly in regard to faulty services and overbilling, there is an urgent need for the Department to take concerted steps to improve their services in these fields. The Department of Telecommunications should monitor telephones of those subscribers whose telephones are likely to be misused and also explore feasibility of installing meters at users' residences.

Strengthening of Vigilance Machinery
(Paragraph 6.21, Sl. No. 43)

58. Recommending to strengthen its vigilance machinery and to evolve a foolproof system of supervision for removing the existing nexus between telephone staff and unscrupulous elements the Committee had in Paragraph 6.21 of their Report stated:

"The Committee also find that Department has undertaken computerised billing and has fixed targets for the same. They feel that this will help in removing the complaints of subscribers to a considerable extent. The Department of Telecommunication, nevertheless, should strengthen its vigilance machinery and evolve a foolproof system of supervision to remove the existing nexus between telephone staff and unscrupulous elements indulging in misuse of STD facility. The Committee recommend that the Department should take strong and visible punitive action against such erring staff found guilty of connivance. The Committee would also like the Department to take stern action on all complaints of malpractices and ensure a very high level of consumer satisfaction. The Committee also desire that high level officers of Department of Telecommunications should listen to the grievances of the subscribers as and when they visit a particular state."

59. In their Action Taken Note dated 20th August, 1992 the Department of Communications have replied as under:

"The following steps have been taken:—

- (a) A number of joint raids were conducted alongwith CBI Officers at Delhi, Bombay, Ahmedabad, etc. to prevent fraudulent use of STD/ISD calls. In appropriate cases, disciplinary proceedings have been initiated. More than a dozen cases have been registered with CBI.
- (b) An amendment in the Indian Telegraph Act has been proposed to provide deterrent penalty for the beneficiaries of diversion of telephone lines leading to the leakage of telephone revenue. The case for introducing a Bill in the monsoon session of Parliament for the purpose is under process.
- (c) 120 Vigilance Officers, Inquiry Officers and Presiding Officers were trained in the Departmental Training Centres as well as in the training centre of CBI.
- (d) Sanction has also been accorded by the Department to the CBI for creating four cells exclusively for detection of frauds leading to the leakage of telephone revenue.
- (e) Action has been taken to strengthen the Vigilance Cell in the Directorate and in the field units.
- (f) Attention to the grievances of the subscribers, by the high level

officers of the Department will be ensured by their participation in Telephone Adalats, Open House Sessions and Meetings with the members of public during their visits outstation”.

60. In regard to strengthening of vigilance machinery, the Committee have been informed that an amendment in the Indian Telegraph Act has been proposed to provide deterrent penalty for the unauthorised beneficiaries on diversion of telephone lines leading to the leakage of telephone revenue. The Committee may be informed of the latest position in this regard.

61. The Department of Telecommunications have also stated that sanction has been accorded by the Department to the CBI for creating 4 cells exclusively for detection of frauds leading to the leakage of telephone revenue. The Committee would like to know the reaction of the CBI in this regard and whether the cells proposed in the Bureau have come into operation.

Maintenance of User Telephone Instruments (Para 6.22 Sl. No. 44)

62. Expressing their concern about the number of average complaints and faults during 1988 and 1989 which stood at 27.7% and 21.6% respectively, the Committee had, in paragraph 6.22 of the Report stated that the above figures do not reflect the acuteness of the problems faced by the public particularly in the maintenance of user telephone instruments, fault repairs, subscriber services and overbilling. They had strongly urged the Department of Communications to make vigorous efforts for tackling subscribers' discontentment and to provide prompt and courteous service to the subscribers.

63. In their reply dated 20th August, 1992, the Department of Communications have stated as under:

“The Department has set an ambitious plan of reducing the number of faults per 100 stations to 15 by March, 92 and 14 by March, 93. These targets are set under Mission Better Communication and action plans are drawn. One of the items of action plan is the replacement of faulty telephone instruments. Annually, targets are fixed for replacement of telephone instruments and any instrument not giving service is replaced.

Regarding the fault repair service, the department has already made plans to computerise this service so that the fault is booked immediately and action for rectification are taken.

There are plans to computerise 79 fault repair centres upto March, 92 and 286 during 1992-93. Instructions have also been issued for computerising any new exchange for more than 1000 lines.

The Department is fully aware of the attitude of the staff towards

public and actions have been drawn for training the staff dealing with the public. This programme is actually being monitored at the HQrs."

64. From the reply furnished by the Department of Communications, the Committee note that the Department had set an ambitious plan of reducing the faults per 100 stations to 15 by March, 1992 and 14 by March, 1993. The Committee would like to know the actual performance in this regard.

65. In regard to the plans for computerising Fault Repair Service the Committee would like to know whether all the telephone exchanges in the country have been provided with this facility and, if so, what is the experience of the Department in regard to the time taken for locating the fault and restoring the service.

Working of Public Call Offices (Para 6.23 Sl. No. 45)

66. In paragraph 6.23 of their Report, the Committee had recommended:

"In this context the Committee note that department has a stringent procedure laid down for testing on a daily basis whether all public call offices (PCOs) are working properly. The Committee are however, constrained to find that there is no effective monitoring to ensure that PCOs are actually working satisfactorily."

67. The Department of Communications have in their Action Taken Note dated 20 August, 1992 stated as under:

"In the whole country there are more than 1.36 lakh Public Call Offices (PCOs) and as indicated to the Committee stringent procedure has been laid down for testing them on a daily basis to ensure that they are working properly. The monitoring is done at the Headquarters through exception reports. Recently, we have included a parameter on restoration of P.Ts within 24 hours in the monthly statement which is received from all the Telecom Circles. A copy of the MQ.01 form is enclosed."

In order to ensure that the Public Telephones remain in working conditions we are increasingly going in for manned public telephones both local and STD types. The person operating the telephone gets a commission on the earnings and thus has strong interest to ensure that his telephone is in working order. The Rural LDPTs are also being provided in Panchyat Offices or other places where the user has interest in ensuring that these are working properly. It is expected that this reform will ensure that public telephones will remain in working order and the restoration also will be quicker.

Further, a very large number of public telephones are being provided so that public may not feel inconvenience if few of them remain out of order due to vandalism/misuse since many alternate PTs are available in the neighbourhood."

68. The Committee feel that the working of Public Call Offices is far from satisfactory despite the fact that the Department of Communications has started monitoring their work at the Head Quarters through Exception Reports.

69. The Committee would like that the figures regarding number of public telephones and earnings therefrom as well as the periods for which these telephones have remained non-operational may be furnished to them.

Local Calls

(Para 6.25 Sl. No. 47)

The Committee had, in paragraph 6.25 of the Report, recommended:

"The Committee are also dismayed to note that only 47% of local calls mature at the first instance. The Committee hope that the Department would look into this matter and take appropriate steps to ensure a higher percentage of 'calls-matured'."

70. In their Action Taken Note, the Department of Telecommunications have stated as under:

"As pointed out in Para 6.15, the figure of 47% is for the call success rate on live traffic, which is considered satisfactory. This is the actual number of calls answered and does not include incompletely dialled calls abandoned in the middle, subscribers found busy, apart from congestion in the network. It is seen that about 30% of the subscribers are tested busy which are the major causes of low figure. Even as per CCITT standard, the figure of call success rate of the order of 60% is considered to be good. We are able to achieve this figure in some stations but the overall All India figure is lower, on account of those cities where major part of the network is still non-electronic and is subjected to heavy congestion, on account of fast growing demand for telephone services."

71. The Committee express their concern over the fact that the Department of Communications are satisfied with the figure of 47% for the Call Success Rate on live traffic against the figure of call success rate of the order of 60% as per CCITT standards. Whereas the Department has been able to achieve call success rate of the order of 60% in some stations, the All India figure is nevertheless much too low. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Department should look into this matter carefully and take appropriate steps to ensure at least 60% call success rate of call matured and for this purpose concentrate on improvement in services in those areas where the maturity of calls is less than 50%.

**Delay in information of Telecom Advisory Committees
(Para 6.26 Sl. No. 48)**

72. Deprecating the inordinate delay in the formation of Telephone/Telecom Advisory Committee, the Committee had in paragraph 6.26 of the Report recommended:—

“The Committee are constrained to find that Telephone Advisory Committees are not in existence since December, 1989. The Committee highly deprecate the inordinate delay in the formation of these Committees. They would also like the Department to ensure that in future the new Telephone Advisory Committees are constituted before the term of existing Committees expire. They also desire that the committees meet as frequently as they are expected to meet. Subscribers should also be well informed about the existence and functions of these Committees so that they may approach these Committees to give their suggestion for betterment of telecommunication services/ventilation of their genuine grievance.”

73. In their reply dated 20 August, 1992 the Department of Telecommunications have stated:—

“The observations of the Committee are noted. In all, the Department is expected to have 119 Telephone/Telecom. Advisory Committees in the country. One TAC is formed for each State/Union Territory/metro district/major district/minor district.

Out of these 119 Committees, 67 Committees stand reviewed/reconstituted/constituted. Remaining 52 TACs are being reviewed for needful action.”

74. The Committee are constrained to note that out of 119 Telephone/Telecom Advisory Committees only 67 committees stand reviewed/reconstituted and the remaining 52 Committees were being reviewed. The Committee urge the Government to reconstitute the remaining Committees without any further delay. They also desire the Department of Telecommunications to ensure that in future the new Telephone Advisory Committees are reconstituted before the term of existing Committees expires.

The Committee also wish to know the number of sittings held by each of the Telephone/Telecom Advisory Committee during the last 3 years.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Sl. No. 1, Para No. 1.31)

In their submission before the Committee during the evidence the Department of Telecommunication have emphasised that the growth in telecommunication services bears a direct co-relation with development in other sphere of economic and social activity and thereby contributes immensely in optimisation of resources through enhanced levels of productivity and efficiency. Better telecommunications ensure speedy transmission and dissemination of information and obviate the need to travel. These also help in rapid economic growth, expansion of public welfare and ultimately social transformation. It is, thus abundantly clear that optimal investment in this sector which, in the opinion of the Committee, has the same importance in the developmental process of other sectors such as agriculture, transport and energy, is absolutely necessary if country has to keep pace with a rapidly changing global economy. The Committee, therefore, deprecate the fact that due weightage is not being assigned to the growth of telecom infrastructure in the country. The Committee, urge the Government to give high priority to this sector in the 8th and 9th Five Year Plan. They also recommend that these two plans should be formulated in such a manner so as to focus adequately on achieving an 'all-nation-connectivity' right down to the village level.

Action Taken

Observations of the Estimates Committees noted. These observations have also been forwarded to the Planning Commission. The revised draft 8th plan proposals (92—97) as also the Perspective Plan 2000 AD were drawn up keeping in mind the role played by the telecommunications services for the development of the socio-economic activities of the nation. The outlay proposed was Rs. 40555 crores covering expansion and modernisation of the telecom services. A major thrust proposed was to achieve nation wide connectivity of all subscribers. The plan *inter-alia* envisaged the following:

- Provide telephones practically on demand in rural and tribal areas.
- Waiting period for telephone connections not to exceed two years.

Provide phone facility in all Gram Panchayats by 1.4.1995.

- Additional 1.5 lakh villages to have Long Distance Public Telephones by 1.4.1997.
- Public call offices for every 100 households in urban areas.
- Provide NSD facility to all exchanges by 1.4.1997.
- Subdivisional headquarters/tehsil headquarters or equivalent towns and all exchanges of size 500 lines or more to be covered by 1.4.1995 for NSD facility,
- All industrial growth centres, tourist and pilgrimage centres to be provided NSD facility by 1.4.1995.
- Achieve fully automatic network by March 1994 by replacing all manual exchanges.
- Replace all strowger MAX-III exchanges by electronic exchanges (as part of the programme to provide NSD to all exchanges).
- Replace life expired and worn out switches as and when they become life expired.
- Delivery of 98% of booked telegrams within 12 hours and 100% within 24 hours.
- Bureaufax centres at subdivisional/Tehsil headquarters or equivalent towns.

Noting the observations of the Estimates Committee the Planning Commission have conveyed that Telecommunication is envisaged to be one of the priority areas and would receive full encouragement from the Commission.

However, NCD has approved an outlay of only about Rs. 24000 crores for Telecom. Services. Attempt is being made to generate more resources by tapping other alternative means so as to achieve the physical targets proposed in the 8th Plan document.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-1091 B. dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 4, Para No. 1.34)

To enable the officers and staff of the Department of Telecommunications to perform their duties efficiently and effectively and to keep them abreast of the latest modern technology it is imperative that they are provided training at periodic intervals. The Committee note that officers and staff of the department are not geared to meet the challenges of changing scenario in the field of telecommunication. The Committee are constrained to note that allocation of funds for the purpose of training has not been commensurate with the rapid expansion in the area of telecom-

munication and introduction of modern technology in this field. Keeping in view the widely perceived state of continuing telephone faults, the Committee are inclined to take the view that the technicians employed to man the equipment in the exchanges as also the telephone instruments are not attitudinally trained to perform at an optimum level of efficiency and courtesy. The Committee would, therefore, like the department to strengthen its training programme. They feel that such training programmes ought to emphasise the attitudinal changes of the officers and staff of the department to help them to be not only in tune with modern technology but to be sufficiently motivated to attend to the subscriber's problems which include acute difficulties faced by them regarding fault repairs, trunk bookings, directory enquiries etc. with promptness and courtesy.

Action Taken

Keeping in view the changing technological scenario in the field of telecommunications and future requirement of managing the telecom. systems involving complexity of high technology and new skills of management, a new training strategy for training the personnel of the Department of Telecom. has been formulated and being implemented through the 38 training centres all over the country. The training strategy consists of imparting three types of training:

I. Induction Training

(a) All the officers and staff of the Department of Telecommunications are given induction training on their first appointment. Recently the induction training programmes of ITS Group 'A' probationers and Junior Telecom Officers have been resignated to meet the high-tech requirements viz. E1OB, C-DOT, ILT, Digital Transmission System, Satellite Communications, Data Communications and Optical Fibre systems etc.

(b) To meet the changing needs of telecom technologies Group C & D cadres have been restructured as Phone Mechanic, Telecom Technical Assistant and Senior Telecom Operation Assistant and are being imparted induction training in the high-tech systems and computerization. The total strength of such cadres requiring the induction training is about 60,000 and we have set up training capacity of 12,000 per annum to complete this task in five years period.

II. Refresher Training

In addition to induction training, the need based training programmes are implemented to equip the officials to handle new technology viz. E1OB, C-DOT, Optical Fibre, Digital Microwave, MARR and C-DOT systems. Adequate training capacities have been built up to meet these requirements and also to ensure that every official is given training once in five years time. During the 1991-92 period about 21,000 officials were given refresher training.

III. *Management/Attitudinal Development Training Programme*

The Department of Telecommunications attaches great importance for development of management/attitudinal skills in the staff. The Group 'A' officers of the Deptt. are given 3 obligatory management training during their service period. These stages are Stage-I. (4—9 years), Stage-II (10—16 years) and Stage-III (17—21 years). The Group 'B' officers of the department are given obligatory 2 weeks management orientation programme.

The attitudinal development courses on subjects like 'Customer Relation, Public Relations, A Good Telephone Operator, Linemen and Public' etc. are conducted for the lower cadres of the department. During the year 1991-92, 21632 personnel have been given these attitudinal development training.

This has approval of Member (Services), Telecom Commission.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B. dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl No. 4, Para No. 1.35)

The Committee recommend the Department to earmark sufficient funds for purpose of training and for other Human Resources Development objectives/requirements.

Action Taken

The details of the funds allotted for training purposes in D.O.T. are indicated in the Annexure—I (attached). From the perusal of this statement, it is evident that the percentage allotment of funds is increasing year by year i.e. 0.49% in 1990-91 to 0.58% in 1992-93 (BE). As against the expenditure of Rs. 160 crore during the last five years, the 8th Plan (1992-97) provisions are Rs. 214.5 crores. With the proposed fund allotment, the D.O.T. would be able to provide infrastructure in the form of departmental buildings of training centres/hostals etc. and create better environment to impart training to the officials.

This has approval of Member (Services), Telecom Commission.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

ANNEXURE-I

SUBJECT: Action Taken Note on 4th Report of Estimates Committee Para No. 1.35.

I. The budget provision under the Telecom Training heads for the Revenue and Capital for the last three years are shown here as % basis which shows that the sufficient funds have been provided for the purpose and for other HRD activities.

Revenue for Major Head 3225 (Rupees in thousands)

	1990-91 Actual	1991-92 RE	1992-93 BE
(A) B-1(1) Operation Training	1,36,06	1,45,40	1,58,10
(B) E-1 Engg. Training	16,65,04	20,78,87	34,96,30
(C) E-4(6) Petty Works	5,87,71	4,30,58	4,49,58
<i>Capital Major Head 5225</i>			
Training Centres BB-5(2) (1)	7,67,58	8,91,40	12,73,85
Grant Total on Training:	31,56,39	35,46,25	53,77,83
Gross Budget	6,49,62,600	6,86,74,600	9,30,34,800
% on G/Budget:	.49%	.52%	.58%

II) — Expenditure during last five years = Rs. 159.27 crore

— 8th Plan proposals = Rs. 214.5 crore

Recommendation (Sl. No. 16, Para 3.55)

The Committee desire to emphasise that while envisioning such a monopoly in regard to Telecom. services due allowance should be made for inherent inefficiencies of this arrangement. This the Committee believe, can be done by encouraging the bulk users of Telecom. Services to run their dedicated network in tandem with the public network by popularising private branch exchanges and finally by promoting rural Telecom. Consumer Cooperative.

Action Taken

1. Telecom. Commission has finalised the access from bulk users data networks to public data network at prescribed rates.

2. Private Branch Exchanges are permitted to be used by subscribers. Group PABXs for the use of people having common interest i.e. offices, departments, commercial and industrial establishments and residents of a

premises/multi-storeyed buildings are also permitted. For popularising the use of Private Branch Exchanges direct inward dialling has also been permitted, wherever feasible.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 18, Para No. 3.57)

The Committee find that even though performance during the 7th Five Year Plan in respect of commissioning of LDPTs has been below expectations the Department continue to be ambitious about its achievements in this area during the 8th Five Year Plan. The Committee also note that a serious handicap faced by the Department during the 7th Five Year Plan has been the shortage of equipment, mainly of switching systems, which have, hitherto for been manufactured in the public sector and are based on imported technology, a situation which has inherent limitations in yielding desired flow of equipment. The Committee, however, appreciate the fact that Department of Telecommunications is seized of the problem and has devised a twin strategy of developing indigenous technology for manufacture of large, medium and small switching systems and of productionising these technologies in the private sector.

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications OM No. 27-1091-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 19, Para No. 3.58)

The Committee also welcome the present trend towards liberalisation of Telecom Equipment production and hope that this will result in easing the equipment related constraints which are presently hampering the expansion of telecom network in the country. *The Committee would like the Government to not merely stop at issuing licences for manufacture of equipment but to maintain constant interface in the industry, both in public and private sector in order to ensure that process of liberalisation works according to plan and yields concrete results.*

Action Taken

Development of Telecommunications Industry was transferred from Deptt. of Electronics to Telecom Commission in 1989. Since then, the Telecom Commission has been constantly interacting with various Telecom Equipment manufacturers, both in public and private sector. Regular meetings are held with the manufacturers licences at various levels to review various issues relevant to productionisation of various Products. Minister of State for Communication has also chaired an open house meeting and some of the coordination meetings with the Industry...

[Deptt. of Telecommunications OM No. 27-1091-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 25, Para No. 3.64)

The Committee have also been informed that after a comprehensive review for identifying the existing gap between demand and supply for satellite equipment and selection of appropriate technologies certain firms in private as well as in public sectors have been permitted to manufacture different types of satellite equipments. The Committee desires that Department should closely monitor the progress of those firms so that the targets of the 8th Five Year Plan are realised.

Action Taken

Deptt. of Telecommunications had carried out a comprehensive review for identifying the production of various satellite equipment by various manufacturers both in Private as well as Public sectors. With the recent liberalisation of the Industrial policies many new manufacturers are also likely to come up for the production of various satellite telecommunication equipment. The observation of the Committee that the Department should closely monitor the progress of these firms so that targets of the 8th Plan are realised has been taken note of and the Production Group set up in the Department of Telecommunications is entrusted with close and regular monitoring of all production units both in Private as well as Public Sector.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications OM No. 27-1091-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 28, Para No. 4.17)

The Committee are inclined to accept connectivity throughout the country to be the appropriate goal for development of Telecommunications. Expansion of rural telecom network and establishment of Public Call Offices have a special significance in achieving this objective. The Committee note that it is the objective of the Government to establish at least one telephone facility within about 5 kms. of every inhabited place preferably in the Gram Panchayat of villages. The present policy of the Government is also to provide telephone facilities irrespective of profit or loss, at all the stations where the various levels of administrative machinery are sited. The Committee also note the D.O.T. aims at providing P.C.Os. at bus-stands, railway stations, high-schools and highways, besides in the villages. The Committee find these objectives laudable and would like to emphasise the need to ensure proper and round the clock functioning of the P.C.Os. through appropriate technological, organisational and administrative measures. *The Committee are constrained to say that the actual functioning of PCOs is far from satisfactory and would, therefore, desire that the Department should effectively monitor the functioning of PCOs. They also recommend expeditious introduction of latest equipment for improving the performance of PCOs. The Committee would expect the Government to draw a perspective plan in this regard with special focus on*

promoting Rural Telecommunications. The Committee find that for achieving the desired level of connectivity, difficulties are being faced by D.O.T. in regard to rural radio solution. The Committee desire that the Department should strive to overcome these difficulties to achieve visible results and make a speedy headway in this direction under a time-bound programme.

Action Taken

Detailed instruction have been issued for monitoring the functioning of PCOs. Since the number of rural installations consisting of Telephone Exchanges and Public Telephones is very large, the concept of decentralised monitoring has been adopted. As per the instructions, the monitoring is being done at various levels, beginning at the lowest level of Junior Telecom Officers/Technicians. Exception reports are to follow upwards for faults and their clearance. Finally, exceptionally delayed cases are to get reported to the Telecom Commission Headquarters.

For further promotion of Rural Telecommunication, the Department has been drawn up specific programme to first cover all Panchayat villages with telephone facilities by March, 1997 and then extend the telephone facility to other villages progressively. Use of modern technology equipment such as Multi Access Rural Radio systems & singly channel VHF systems which have now become indigenously available, has been emphasized.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 30, Para No. 4.19)

The Committee noted that telecom services in remote hilly areas and Island territories are highly unsatisfactory. In this context, they would like the Department for Telecom to accord overriding priority to Remote areas like Island territories and hilly areas in sanctioning, supplying and installation of state of art equipment including electronic exchanges.

The Committee would also like the Ministry to expedite the completion of two on-going schemes for provision of telecommunication facilities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. They would also like to be apprised of the latest position with regard to the provision of STD channels between Port Blair and the other Islands.

Action Taken

It has been proposed in the 8th Plan document that while providing telecom facilities liberally during the period 1992-93, priority for early completion within this period will be given to the following areas in general.

- Sensitive border areas
- Tribal and hilly areas
- Industrial growth centres.

Two schemes are sanctioned under Development Programme of Islands for A&N and Lakshadweep group of Islands. The status is as follows:

(a) A&N Islands:

Under this scheme four Satellite Earth Stations were planned and three have already been provided—one at Rangat, Hutbay and Kamorta. The Satellite Earth Station at Katchal is targetted for Commissioning during the last quarter of the current financial year subject to the availability to the equipments.

STD facility has been provided to Car Nicobar, Mayabunder, Diglipur, Kamorta and Rangat.

(b) Lakshadweep Group of Islands:

All the four Satellite Stations at Androth, Agatti, Kiltan and Kalpeni have been commissioned.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 31, Para No. 5.25)

The Committee find that the tariff policy followed by the Department of Telecommunications is based mainly on incidence of usage, the value of service rendered, susceptible to administration besides generation of revenue surplus for further expansion and R&D efforts.

Action Taken

No action is called for.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 33, Para No. 5.27)

The Committee wish to emphasize that telecommunication in the present day scenario is a necessity rather than a luxury, and would, therefore, like the department to make all efforts to keep the tariffs low. The Committee urge that all the necessary measures proposed to be taken by the Department viz. reduction in cost of equipment, introduction of cost effective technology, increasing productivity through the use of modern maintenance practices tool, office automation, training of staff etc. should be taken under a definite time frame.

Action, Taken

The Department of Telecommunications draws time bound programmes while framing plan proposals depending upon the availability of resources both physical and financial. The draft 8th Plan proposals cover this aspect.

Centre for development of Telematics is engaged in the development of Telecom products keeping in mind the competing technologies and cost of the products for the use of the Telecom Department.

Modern maintenance practices have been adopted in all the electronic exchanges to increase the productivity. This is apparent from the fact that there is reduction of maintenance staff to about 50% and increase in revenue by around 20 to 30%. There is a little scope for adopting modern tools in electro-mechanical exchanges.

Network Management and Surveillance System (NMS), the most modern tools, will improve call completion and productivity in large multi-exchange systems and the long distance switching network when put in service. Processing of the NMS for local system is expected in 1992-93. A tender for the NMS for the National Network has been floated and is under evaluation. The office automation is covered under the main project of Computerised Information System (CIS-DOT) which has been proposed to be completed in the 8th Five Year Plan (1992-97) for further improving the productivity.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendations (Sl. Nos. 34 & 35, Para No. 5.28 & 5.29)

The Committee have been informed that distinction between business and domestic calls is prevalent in many countries of the world. The Committee also find that the Department of Telecommunications has a proposal to fix dual tariff for commercial and domestic sectors, which has not been finalised so far. The Bureau of Industrial Costs and Price (BICP) who have been entrusted with a study on tariff structure for the telecom services is also stated to be considering the question of dual tariff.

The Committee are inclined to take the view that the proposal to have a dual tariff structure is not without merit more so when it can help DOT in bridging the resource gap and bringing about necessary expansion of telecom facilities in rural areas where it will at the present juncture, provide more of a social welfare input. However, the Committee will like to caution the Government at the same time about the possibility of such an arrangement being misused by unscrupulous elements leading to leakage of revenue. The Committee hope that Government will take a considered view in the matter after consulting all concerned including BICP.

Action Taken

The Recommendations of the Committee will be kept in view while taking a decision on the dual tariff structure.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 38, Para No. 5.32)

As regards outstanding bills disputed by the subscribers and pending in Courts and Consumer Councils, the Committee are of the opinion that for expeditious disposal of these cases the Department should encourage using the instrument of Telephone Adalats.

Action Taken

A letter has been issued to the field Units of Department of Telecom. reiterating the existing instructions on Telephone Adalats. The field Units have also been asked to apprise the Courts/Consumer Councils of the existence, functions and scope of the Telephone Adalats so that the Courts etc. may consider and refer the cases, pending before them, to the Telephone Adalats for expeditious disposal.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. Para No. 5.34)

The Committee note that payment of telephone bills by 60% of subscribers is not done in time thereby not only causing revenue losses to the Department but inconvenience to subscribers on account of disconnection of their telephones. To avoid the late payment of telephone bills Department is stated to be considering the levying of surcharge on bills delayed for payment. The Committee would like the Department to consider this issue in all its ramifications before arriving at final decision.

The Department should, however, ensure that in the first instance correct telephone bills are despatched to the consumers well before the date of their payment so that there is no harassment to the consumers on account of delayed receipt/non-receipt of telephone bills; and there should be at least a minimum time lag of 15 days between receipt of bill and last date of payment.

Action Taken

1. Telephone bills are issued on bimonthly basis to the subscribers in a cycle. The due date for issue of bills is 1st, 11th and 21st of the month. Before issue accuracy of the bill is ensured through certain checks. However some mistakes due to human error may occur. In order to ensure that the bills reach the subscribers on the due date, efforts are made to despatch the bills 2 or 3 days earlier. As such the subscriber gets a clear period of 15 days at hand to make the payment of bill and to settle any discrepancy in it during that period. Even if the subscriber does not make the payment within 15 days, he is given another opportunity by reminding him on phone three times. Recently the Department has issued the instructions providing for disconnecting the telephone only after 15 days of issue of Registered reminder to those subscribers who are not able to pay

COPY

Government of India
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
New Delhi-110001.

No. 2-14/86-TR

Dated the 11-2-86.

To

All Heads of Telecom. Circle/Telephone Districts.

SUBJECT:—Telephone Revenue:—Observance of instructions on accuracy of bills, issue of split up bills; guard against disconnection despite payment etc.

Instructions have been issued from time to time for ensuring accuracy of bills, issue of split up bills in case of disputes; guarding against wrong disconnection despite payment of dues and prompt disposal of excess metering complaints. Despite these instructions we have been receiving a large number of complaints on the above. Hence with a view to eliminate such complaints, these instructions are reiterated below: All concerned may please be suitably advised to follow the instructions, and procedures prescribed in the Manuals scrupulously with a view to ensure subscribers satisfaction.

1. Accuracy of bills:

Detailed instructions to avoid issue of wrong bills have been issued vide this office letter No. 2-34/81-TR dated 17.12.83. These are reiterated below:

(i) it must be ensured that the perforated copy of the local calls statement AGE 91(A) showing the fortnightly meter reading with all columns duly filled in is received on the due date prescribed for each cycle and necessary remarks about spare numbers. M.P's telephones etc. have been given. Similarly it should be ensured that the trunk call tickets are received on due dates;

(ii) the checks entrusted to TRA0 in respect of the meter readings statements are to be carried out fully;

(iii) necessary checks should be exercised to ensure that the bills

do not contain clerical errors. In the case of Districts where the billing is computerised, utmost care should be taken to feed the data correctly;

(iv) the bills should be prepared legibly showing all the particulars and as far as possible, the same should be addressed by the Addressograph or where Bradma Plate is not available, the bills are addressed legibly with complete address;

(v) the bills should be so despatched that they reach the subscribers well in time and that each subscriber gets a period of clear 15 days for making payment; and

(vi) where for one reason or the other, there is delay in the issue of bills or in the despatch, a rubber stamp showing the actual date of issue and due date of payment affixed.

2. Disconnection despite payment of dues

The need for guarding against irregular disconnection of telephones has been stressed in this office letter No. 2-15/84-TR dated 24-9-84 and a periodical review through a Register was prescribed to take remedial measures to minimise the incidence of wrong disconnections. From the reports of Half yearly review received from many of the Circles/Districts it has been observed that negligence to update the bill Register/SRCs and delay in receipt of Post Office Daily lists of collections are the main causes for wrong disconnections besides other minor reasons. As has been stressed by DDG (TRF) in his D.O. letter No. 2-1584-TR dated 12-9-85, to the Heads of Circles/Districts, the delayed receipt of list of Post Office collections, may be brought to the notice of Post Master General Concerned to bring about improvement. The officials at fault in updating the SRC/Bill Register should be dealt with sternly and responsibility fixed for each case of irregular disconnection. All concerned may be suitably advise to follow the instructions contained in this office letter No. 2-1584-TR dated 24-9-84.

3. Issue of split up bills

Instructions for the preparation of split up bills in cases of disputes have been issued in this office letter No. 2-1082-TR dated 29-10-84, according to which, the provisional bill for local call charges issued under Para 434(ii) of P&T Manual Volume XIV should be for the average number of calls metered during the *six bi-monthly periods (one year)* immediately preceding the disputed period plus 10% over the average. It may be ensured that the split up bills prepared in accordance with these instructions are issued to subscribers wherever requested provided other conditions as prescribed under the rules are satisfied.

4. Expeditious disposal of Excess Billing complaints

The need for prompt settlement of excess metering complaints has been emphasised on many an occasion. In spite of these instructions, it has been observed that a number of cases are pending settlement in various units. As has been indicated in this office letter No. 23-1581-TR dated 5.4.82,

the Committee on Telecommunications has desired that the excess metering complaints should be settled within one month as far as possible. It is once again emphasised that the complaint cases are settled without loss of time which would ensure subscriber satisfaction, besides realisation of dues at the earliest. Guidelines for handling the excess billing complaints have been communicated to all Heads of Circles/Districts vide this office letter No. 3-62/SC/77-TR dated 11-10-77, a copy of which was also enclosed with this office letter No. 23-1581-TR dated 5-4-82. Suitable steps may therefore be taken to ensure settlement of excess metering complaints within one month.

These instructions may please be brought to the notice of all concerned.

Receipt of this letter may please be acknowledged.

Hindi version of this letter will follow.

Sd/-
(R. SWAMINATHAN)
Director (Sea)

Copy for information to:—

1. All I.F.A's Telecom Circles/Telephones Districts.
2. File No. 18-44/85-TR
3. Director (IC)/Director (Inspection-Telecom).

COPY

**Government of India
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
Sanchar Bhawan, 20-Ashoka Road,
New Delhi-1.**

No. 2-1489-TR

Dated 29.9.1989.

To

All Heads of Telecom Circles/Telephone Districts.

SUBJECT:—*Steps to prevent leakage of revenue due to failure to issue bills for services provided.*

A number of cases of failure to issue bills for non-exchange lines, private wires cables, and circuits are being pointed out by the Audit and internal check every year and Audit paras and Internal Check objections on such lapses have become a regular feature.

2. Several provisions exist in the rules as well as in the instructions issued by this office from time to time to eliminate failure to issue bills for the various services provided. Para 248 of the P&T Manual Volume XIV prescribes that an Annual Statement shall be sent by the Phone/Commercial Sections of the Division/District to the Telephone Revenue Section regarding guaranteed lines and exchanges provided by the Department. Similarly, Para 427 *ibid* prescribes that the Telephone Branch/Commercial Branch, shall furnish a separate list of items not included in the directory to the TRA Section. The TRA Section is required to compare these items with the actual services billed for and take action for obtaining the completed advice-notes in respect of services for which billing is not being done.

3. In addition, instructions prescribing the maintenance of a register for watching the progress of works relating to circuits PBX, non-exchange lines etc. provided on Rent and Guarantee basis were also issued vide this office letter No. 23-11-73 dated 31-5-75. These instructions were again reiterated in our letter No. 23-1585-TR(Pt) dated 29.10.86.

4. Despite these instructions and the provisions in the rules large scale draft audit paras are still being received in this office, which clearly shows that the instructions are not being followed in the letter and spirit. There is, therefore, a need for further streamlining the earlier instructions so as to capture the data regarding provision of such services at a place where the same are actually provided so that there is no omission in informing the TRA Section of the provision of the services. M.D.F. is a place where complete record of all the services provided is kept. It has, therefore, been decided that a system of numbering of all the circuits, private wires, non-exchange lines, ticker lines, data circuits etc. as provided, may be developed, as under:—

- (1) To start with, the officer incharge of the MDF records of all exchanges should be asked to furnish a complete list of the circuits, non-exchange lines, private wires etc. existing on date to the TRA Section for verification with their records to see whether all the services are being billed by them or not. In case of Inter Division or Inter Circle circuits, it should be ascertained from the other end whether the circuits are being billed by them. In the case of Inter Circle circuits, the Directorate could be consulted in case the billing authority has not been indicated in the Memo. Sanctioning the provision of the circuits.
- (2) Thereafter, the officer incharge of the MDF records should be asked to send a monthly statement of the circuits and other services provided to the Commercial/Phone branch as well as to the Telephone Revenue Account, Section. The Commercial/Phone branch should indicate the advice notes numbers under which the provision of circuits has been made and send the same to the T.R. Section for further verification.
- (3) In the T.R. Section the work should be coordinated with the Commercial/Phone branch and services provided should be billed after getting the necessary completed advice-notes.
- (4) Cases where advice-notes have been received, should be taken up with the concerned officers on priority basis and brought to the personal notice of the Telecom District Engineer/Manager/GM for necessary action.
- (5) The number of circuit given by the M.D.F. should also be indicated in the Subscriber's Record Cards and also in the corresponding bills.

(6) The system of numbering is indicated below:—

- (i) The first one/two characters may be used to indicate the type of facility viz.

'PW'=for private wire in the same exchange and for exchange areas.

'TP'=for T.P. Circuits for local and long distance connections.

'SP'=for long-distance speech circuits.

'T'=for ticker lines.

'D'=for Data Circuits.

'F'=for Facsimile circuits etc.

- (ii) The next two/three characters would indicate the exchange in the circle to which the main office of the party is connected and the SSA of that exchange would be the billing authority.
- (iii) The next two/three characters would indicate the exchange where the other end line terminates;
- (iv) The last two/three characters would indicate the Serial No. of the facility provided by the respective SSA.

for example, for a speech circuit provided from Davangere to Hubli the numbering would be as follows:

SP/DVG/HBL/12

Similarly for a facsimile circuit provided from Ambala to Jaipur the numbering would be:—

F/AB/JP/101

- (v) The same procedure as outlined above may be adopted for other facilities also with respective prefixes.

The above instructions may please be brought to the notice of all concerned and work of verification and numbering of all existing circuits may be completed by 30.10.89 positively. A report of the compliance may be made to this office during the first week of November-1989.

Sd/-
(S.P. PURWAR)
General Manager (Revenue)

Copy for information and necessary action to:—

- (1) All IFAs of the Telecom Circles/Districts.
- (2) The Director of Audit, P&T, Delhi-110054.
- (3) Director (Internal Check), Telecom Directorate.
- (4) Guard file.

Sd/-
(M.V. SANKARANARAYANAN)
Divisional Officer (F&A) TR

COPY

**Government of India
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
Sanchar Bhawan, 20-Ashoka Road,
New Delhi-1.**

No. 23-4987-TR

Dated 4.11.1988.

To

All C.G.Ms of Telecom Circles/Metro Distts.

SUBJECT:—*Disconnection of Telephones for reasons of non-payment of bills.*

Attention is invited to the instructions contained in Para 159 of P&T Manual Vol. XIV, and elaborated vide this office letter No. 2-1880-TR dated 22.4.80 (copy enclosed) elucidating clearly the procedure to be followed for disconnection of telephones on the non-payment of bills. Despite the said instructions, cases have come to the notice of the Directorate wherein telephones with dues outstanding against them were either not included in the disconnection lists, or if included in the lists, were not disconnected by the exchange authorities. The comptroller and Auditor General of India in his report for 86-87 has pointed out that in the Bhagalpur Telecom District, disconnection lists sent by the Divisional Office to the exchanges remained unattended for years together. The officer-in-charge of the exchanges did not either disconnect the telephones or return the lists to the billing authority with adequate explanations for not having effected the disconnection in each case. Further, the T.R.A. unit also failed to watch the return of the disconnection lists as a result, the defaulting subscribers continued to enjoy the telephone facility without even making payment of their bills.

It has been enjoined earlier that such lapses should be reviewed seriously, the failure to disconnect defaulting subscribers treated as gross misconduct, and disciplinary action taken in every case against the negligent officials/officers.

You are, therefore, again requested to kindly ensure that the provisions of the rules are enforced in the letter and the spirit so as to safeguard more effectively the interests of the Department.

The receipt of this communication may kindly be acknowledged to Shri G.C. Chhabra, Asstt. Director Genl. (TR).

Sd/-
(RUCHIRA MUKHERJEE)
Director (TR)

Copy for information and necessary action:—

1. All Internal Financial Advisors.
2. Managaing Director, M.T.N.L., New Delhi.
3. PHA/PHB Section.

Sd/-
(RUCHIRA MUKHERJEE)
Director (TR)

COPY

**Government of India
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
New Delhi-1.**

No. 4-59/85-TR

Dated 9 April, 1986

To

All Heads of Telecom. Circles/Districts.

SUBJECT:— *Disposal of excess metering complaints.*

The Department has come under severe criticism on account of complaints of alleged excess billing. Even though the number of such complaints is small compared to the total number of bills issued, this is no satisfaction to a customer, who believes that he has been a victim of excess billing. The customer expects a quick disposal of the case. The delay in disposal is basically the root cause of some of the most bitter criticism in this regard.

2. The matter was discussed in the Workshops of Heads of Telecom. Circles and Districts held in Delhi recently. The matter has since been considered by the Telecom. Board. The Board has desired the following strategy to be adopted in this regard supersession of all the earlier orders on the subject:

3. Objectives of action

The objectives of action in this regard are basically:

- (i) if possible, avoid giving rise to complaints of excess billing;
- (ii) if possible, identify the possibility of such excess billing complaint and take preparatory steps for investigation and handling of complaints, should they eventually be made.
- (iii) Acknowledge the complaint promptly on its receipt. If there is a reasonable doubt that the complaint is genuine, provide temporary relief by way of a split bill pending consideration of the complaint.
- (iv) quick investigation of the complaint and final decision.
- (v) if the complaint is found to be genuine with a reasonable doubt that there has been some departmental default, provide permanent relief by way of rebate.

- (vi) in case the complaint is not found justified, give a courteous reply with every attempt to convince the subscriber that nothing wrong has been found in the bill.

4. Avoiding excess billing complaints

4.1 In general, excess billing complaints arise from telephones having STD facility. They arise because of:

- (a) the subscriber, his family, friends and employees having used STD and not being conscious of the extent to which they have used it, or
- (b) a fault in the metering circuit, or some transient fault in the system; and
- (c) possible deliberate mischief by other subscribers in league with our staff.

4.2 As far as 4.1(a) is concerned, we can convince the subscriber only through suitable observations/discussions.

4.3 We have to be vigilant about 4.1(b) and ensure that as far as possible, metering circuits are tested and kept in proper order.

4.4 In regard to 4.1(c), we must ensure that all possible points at which such mischief can take place are suitably guarded. D.Ps must be looked, access to unauthorised persons to sensitive areas in the Exchanges should be avoided and in case of any suspicion about a particular member of the staff, suitable action must be taken.

5. Advance action in case of a possibility of an excess billing complaint.

5.1 Detailed instructions have been issued separately in regard to watching the meter readings of various subscribers and action to be taken on them.

5.2 These broadly consist of

- (a) Meter readings being taken every fortnight;
- (b) Identifying all subscribers whose current fortnightly readings show a sudden spurt; and
- (c) In case of such sudden spurts being noticed, placing the telephone line on observation and deputing responsible staff to the subscriber's premises to check up that there has been no special occasion which might have given rise to such spurts.

5.3 In order to establish the Department's credibility and to satisfactorily investigate complaints about excess billing, it is necessary that these steps are taken conscientiously. It appears that in many stations, while meter readings are being taken regularly every fortnight, the difference is not being struck and all cases of spurts are not being brought out.

5.4 In all cases, the meter readings registers must provide for the difference being noted. Somebody should be held personally responsible to

identify and report all cases of spurts to the officer-in-charge. Failure in this regard must be taken notice of. If an excess billing complaint reveals a spurt, which had not been reported, suitable educational and disciplinary notice should be taken of the concerned staff.

5.5 As far as possible all telephone lines showing a sudden spurt should be put on observation. For this purpose immediate steps must be taken to provide suitable observation equipment in all exchanges having STD facilities, so that once a spurt is noted, the line is actually put on observation.

5.6 In case of sudden spurts being noticed, a suitable officer should be deputed to inspect the installation as well as to ensure that there was no special occasion, which could have given rise to a genuine spurt.

5.7 In this connection, it has been noted that very often the subscribers have been complaining that during a particular period of spurt, the premises had, in fact, been locked since they were away. The official deputed to the subscriber's premises should take particular note of such facts and bring to the notice of the authorities concerned, since this can be useful in tracing the possibility of malpractices.

5.8 If all the above steps are taken, the investigations into an excess billing complaint should become easier and the Department should be in a better position to explain the position to the subscriber.

6. Investigations of an excess billing complaint

6.1 It has been noted that subscribers do not at present have a clear picture as to whom they should contact in case of a suspicion of excess billing. It is necessary that in every important telephone system, one or more specific officers are identified for this purpose. Suitable offices properly furnished should be provided to them to receive the subscribers and process their complaints including issue of split bill. Widest possible publicity should be given that in case of a suspicion of any excess billing, these officers are to be contacted.

6.2 It will be useful to give suitable guidelines to the subscribers in regard to the information to be given by them in support of their excess billing complaints.

6.3 The excess billing complaint must be acknowledged immediately on its receipt. This should be done by every officer, who receives the excess billing complaint. It is possible that the subscriber may address the higher authorities as prescribed in accordance with para 6.1 above. In such cases, such authorities while acknowledging the complaint should indicate that the complaint has been forwarded to the prescribed officer in this regard and to request the subscriber to further contact him only.

6.4 Once the complaint has been received very prompt action must be taken to investigate the same. For this purpose the prescribed officers must

call for the following details from the officers in-charge of exchanges concerned:

- (a) the record of fortnightly readings in respect of 6 preceding bi-monthly periods and for all the available succeeding bi-monthly periods;
- (b) an extract of fault card for the disputed period; and
- (c) spurt report, action taken on the same and the results thereof. This will include (a) observations in the Exchange and (b) any field investigations if carried out.

6.5 In this connection, it has been decided that no field investigation is called for to determine whether there was any occasion for a special spurt after a complaint has been received. This should have been made, if justified, immediately after the spurt was noticed in the fortnightly readings. It has been noticed that no useful purpose is served by undertaking such investigations after an excess billing complaint has been received.

6.6 The Exchanges should be requested to submit the reports in this regard within a prescribed period maximum 15 days. Suitable forms have already been designed for this purpose. These may be modified if considered necessary. On receipt of these reports, the prescribed officers must evaluate all the evidence and make a suitable recommendation to the officer in whose competence the application lies. The powers of various officers for grant of rebates have been prescribed in this office letter No. 2.3/83-TR dated 21.3.86.

6.7 It is possible that the excess bill exceeds the previous bi-monthly bills by substantial amounts. In such cases, temporary relief to the subscriber by way of issuing a split bill may be justified. As already prescribed a split bill may be issued if the bi-monthly bill for local call charges exceeds double the maximum amount of the previous 6 bi-monthly bills for local call charges. The split bill/for local call charges should be limited to the average of local calls billed in the preceding six bi-monthly periods plus 10% thereof and should be issued with a clear statement that this is purely provisional bill pending further investigation into the excess billing complaint and if after investigation the Department comes to the conclusion that the original bill is justified, the subscriber will have to pay the full bill or as may be determined by the competent authority.

6.8 The prescribed officer should obtain the orders of the competent authority as soon as possible, if necessary by submitting the cases personally. In any case, the cases must be disposed of within 2 months from the date of receipt of the complaint.

7. Guidelines for decisions and conveying the same

7.1 In all cases in which the investigations reveal that

- (a)** there has been significant spurt in a particular period;
- (b)** in case of a spurt, there had been some special occasion which might have given rise to a genuine spurt; and
- (c)** the observations indicate genuine STD calls having been made from the subscriber's number no rebate may be granted and the complainant may be suitably informed with the courtesy explaining briefly the investigations carried out and the results thereof.

7.2 On the other hand, if it is found that there had been, in fact, a spurt for reasons unknown or there is a reasonable doubt as to the possible faults on the metering circuit or the subscribers' equipment or a reasonable doubt exists about the possibility of some mischief, the competent officer may grant suitable rebate.

7.3 In every case, the final reply should go to the complainant within a maximum period of 2 months from the date of receipt of the complaint.

7.4 To give credibility to the investigations in the Department, individual typed replies should go to the subscribers, giving very briefly the investigations carried out, the results thereof and the reasons for the final decision.

8. It has been decided that all excess billing complaints remaining pending at present must be disposed of within 2 months as per above guidelines.

9. It is requested that immediate action be taken on the above lines. To recapitulate proper arrangements may be enforced for:

- (a)** taking fortnightly readings, identifying spurts and following them up;
- (b)** identifying one or more officers, who will receive excess billing complaints from the subscribers and giving proper publicity in this regard. Such officers must be housed in readily accessible, properly furnished offices;
- (c)** establishing a proper procedure for handling excess billing complaints; and
- (d)** prompt disposal with individual replies.

10. The receipt of this letter may please be acknowledged to Shri R. Swaminathan, Director (SEA). A monthly report may also be submitted to him indicating : 1) the steps taken (on the lines contained in this letter) and 2) disposal of the existing complaints and new complaints. The report may be sent in the proforma enclosed as an annexure to the monthly

summary sent to Secretary (T). This report should continue to be sent till all the pending cases have been disposed of and above guidelines are fully established.

Sd/-
(S.P. PURWAR)
Deputy Director General (TAF)

Copy to:

P.S. to Secretary (T). The Annexure regarding the disposal of excess metering complaints sent by the Heads of Circles/Districts to the Secretary (T) along with their monthly summary may be delinked and sent to Shri R. Swaminathan, Director (SEA) for further action in his section.

Sd/
(S.P. PURWAR)
Deputy Director General (TAF)

COPY

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
Sanchar Bhawan, New Delhi-110001

No. 2-3/92-TR

Dated: 7th Feb., 1992.

To

1. All Chief General Managers, Telecom.
2. Chief General Managers, Madras/Calcutta Telephones.
3. Chief General Managers, MTNL, Bombay/Delhi.
4. C.M.D. MTNL, Corporate Office, New Delhi.

SUBJECT: *Issue of Registered Notice to defaulters of Telephone Bills.*

1. It has been decided to issue Registered Notices to all the defaulting subscribers before effecting the disconnection of the telephones. A nominal charge of Rs. 10/- per occasion will be collected through the subsequent bill.

2. The present procedure will be in supersession of the existing orders regarding the issue of registered notice to the subscribers on optional basis as per the provisions of Para 160-A of the Telecom Manual Vol.-XIV.

3. A revised time schedule for the issue of Registered Notice is shown in Annexure-A and proforma in Annexure-B.

4. This new scheme should be brought to the notice of all subscribers through advertisements in Local Newspapers wherein the details of the scheme may be highlighted.

5. This scheme should be brought into effect for the bills issued from 21st Feb., 1992 onwards.

6. The scheme will be in addition to the existing procedure of issuing the telephonic reminder to the subscribers for making the payment of the pending telephone bills.

7. Care may be taken to ensure that the disconnection is not effected on a Friday in order to avoid unnecessary hardship to the subscribers.

8. A certificate to the effect that the new scheme has been introduced in your Circle/Unit should be sent to this office by 20-03-1992 positively.

9. Receipt of this communication must be acknowledged to Shri Mukesh Mathur, Director(TR), Telecom Directorate, by return of Post.

10. Hindi version will follow.

Sd/-
(S.D. SAXENA)
Deputy Director General (TRF)

ANNEXURE-A

Revised time schedule for insertion in Annexure-A to Para-160-A of P & T Manual, Vol. XIV

Time schedule to be observed for issue of Registered Reminders and disconnection list in the event of non-payment.

	No. of days from the date of bill	Example for bill dated 21-2-1992
(1) Due date for payment	16th day	08-03-92
(2) Date of receipt in TRA of the payment for the 16th day and noting in S.R.C.	20th day	12-03-92
(3) Issue of Registered Reminder	21st to 24th	13-03-92 to 16-03-92
(4) Further time allowed for payment	33rd day	24-03-92
(5) Date of receipt in TRA of payments made on 2nd-3rd and noting in S.R.Cs.	34th — 35th	25-03-92 — 26-03-92
(6) Date of Issue of Disconnection list	36th — 38th	27-03-92 — 29-03-92
(7) Reminding in case of outstation exchanges	39th — 40th	30-3-92 — 31-03-92
(8) Date of Disconnection	40th day	31-03-92
Date of Disconnection in r/o outstation exchanges	41st day	01-04-92

The process from (3) to (6) above and telephonic reminders (expect in case of outstation exchanges) should be progressively/concurrently gone through in the TRA Branch and concluded for each exchange as and when ready without being held up for completion of work on other exchanges which may be under process.

REMINDER

By Registered Post

Dear

SUB: Non-payment of telephone bill dated.....for Rs._____

I am to bring to your notice that the payment for the telephone bill(s) in respect of your following telephone number(s) for the bi-monthly period ending..... which was/were due for payment on_____ has not yet been made as per our records up to_____. If you have already made payment, kindly let us know your receipt number, date of payment and place of payment by return of Post or over telephone to number:.....

If you have not made payment, kindly arrange to make payment by_____ and intimate this office in person/by communication/over phone. In case you have not received the bill, kindly contact this office for obtaining a duplicate bill free of charge and for making payment. An amount of Rs. 10/- (Rupees Ten only) will be included in next bill towards this service.

Kindly note that if no communication is received from you by_____, we may be constrained to disconnect the telephone after which you may have to pay reconnection charges etc. in addition to pending bills.

I hope that you will make payment of the bill before the above prescribed date and help us to continue to serve you.

Assuring you of our best attention at all times.

Yours sincerely,

Accounts Officer(TR)
o/o.....

To

Mr./Ms./M/s.....

.....

.....

Recommendation (Sl. No. 42, Para No. 6.20)

The Committee note that in order to overcome the problem of excess billing. DOT has introduced detailed billing and automatic STD locking. The Committee feel that such a step will go a long way in mitigating the hardships of the subscribers.

Action Taken

Noted. However, it is clarified that facility of detailed billing and dynamic STD locking is feasible only from certain types of electronic exchanges as explained in the Action Taken Note for para 6.21 below.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 42, Para No 6.20)

In this context the Committee would like the Department to take steps to replace manual exchanges with a view to provide detailed billing facilities and STD lock facilities to subscribers connected with other than E-10B exchanges. Provision of detailed billing facility should also be made in the indigenously developed equipment for the C-400 X Bar and other electro-mechanical exchanges which are being contemplated by the Department.

Action Taken

The Department has made plans to replace all the manual exchanges in the country by March 1993. These exchanges are being replaced with small and medium sized indigenously developed electronic exchanges namely, C-DOT RAX and MILT etc. The facility of detailed billing and STD locking is not possible in the small sized 128 line C-DOT RAXs. The detailed billing facility is not available in 512 line C-DOT RAXs, but this provides the facility of dynamic STD locking.

The imported electronic exchanges PRX and NEAX 61 S type do not have either detailed billing or dynamic STD locking facilities.

As regards detailed billing facilities for the Electro-mechanical equipment like C-400 etc. a dedicated automatic message accounting unit has been installed in one C-400 exchange of Bombay Telephones on a trial basis. There are no plans for installation of such equipment in other C-400 exchanges or the other types of electro-mechanical exchanges as the system is quite expensive and not-so reliable. It is more economical to replace them by electronic exchanges which give a lot more of additional advantages/facilities. There are plans to replace these electro-mechanical exchanges with electronic exchanges in a phased manner by 2000 AD. Meanwhile, wherever feasible, in multi-exchange areas, connections from electro-mechanical exchanges will be given to STD barred subscribers. Instructions to this effect have been issued.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 44, Para No. 6.22)

The Committee note that during the past 4 decades there has been a tenfold increase in the number of telephones in the country. The Committee, however, wish to point out that even while telecommunication network in the country has grown the public dissatisfaction with the poor quality of subscriber service has become more and more acute. The Committee are constrained to state that the number of average complaints and faults during the year 1988 and 1989 which stood at 27.7% and 21.6% respectively do not reflect acuteness of the problems faced by the public particularly in the maintenance of user telephone instruments, fault repairs, subscriber service and over billing. *They, therefore strongly urge the Department to make vigorous efforts for tackling subscriber's discontentment and to provide efficient and prompt and courteous service to the subscribers.*

Action Taken

The Department has set an ambitious plan of reducing the number of faults per 100 stations to 15 by March, 92 and 14 by March, 93. These targets are set under Mission Better Communication and action plans are drawn. One of the items of action plan is the replacement of faulty telephone instruments. Annually, targets are fixed for replacement of telephone instruments and any instrument not giving service is replaced.

Regarding the fault repair service, the department has already made plans to computerise this services so that the fault is booked immediately and action for rectification are taken.

There are plans to computerise 79 fault repair centres upto March, 92 and 286 during 1992-93. Instructions have also been issued for computerising any new exchange for more than 1000 lines.

The Department is fully aware of the attitude of the staff towards public and actions have been drawn for training the staff dealingwith the public. This programme is actually being monitored at the HQrs.

This has the approval of Chairman, Telecom Commission.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 46, Para No. 6.24)

The Committee find that complaints and fault clearance are monitored at various levels under the Management Information System (MIS). However, the Department failed to furnish information regarding number of PCOs actually working which is indicative of lacunae in the existing MIS. Needless to say MIS needs to be strengthened. The Committee can also not but conclude that the daily test report in respect of PCOs are not being sent. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all loopholes in the existing system for Fault Repairs working of PCOs should be plugged without further delay.

Action Taken

Necessary action is being taken for monitoring the work of PCOs.

This has the approval of Chairman, Telecom Commission.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendations (Sl. No. 48, Para No. 6.26)

The Committee are constrained to find that Telephone Advisory Committees are not in existence since December, 1989. *The Committee highly deprecate the inordinate delay in the formation of these Committees. They would also like the Department to ensure that in future the new Telephone Advisory Committees are constituted before the term of existing Committees expire. They also desire that the Committees meet as frequently as they are expected to meet. Subscribers should also be well informed about the existence and functions of these Committees so that they may approach these Committees to give their suggestions for betterment of telecommunication services/ventilation of their genuine grievance.*

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee are noted. In all, the Department is expected to have 119 Telephone/Telecom. Advisory Committees in the country. One TAC is formed for each State/Union Territory/metro district/
major district/minor district.

Out of these 119 Committees, 67 Committees stand reviewed/re-constituted/constituted. Remaining 52 TACs are being reviewed for needful action.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

CHAPTER III

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

• Recommendation (Sl. No. 10, Para No. 2.47)

The Committee would like the Department to make a concerted attempt in bridging the resource gap through increased productivity and greater reliance on market borrowing. They desire the Department to adopt an innovative growth strategy, so that tele-com users are directly involved in the development of Tele-com services.

Action Taken

With the rapid expansion of the telecommunications network, increase in productivity and reduction in budgetary support, the department of Telecommunication is moving towards funding its plan proposals to a large extent through internal resources and the balance through market borrowings. In the 1st plan (1951—56) 20% of the plan outlay was met from the internal resources where as in the 7th plan (1985—90), 66% of the plan outlay was funded through internal resources. The draft 8th Plan envisages reliance on internal resources to the extent of 74%. The remainder has been proposed to be met through Market borrowing. Other innovative growth strategies including franchising of value added services, leasing of equipment etc. are also being tried. The department is working on generating sufficient resources to meet the plan outlays internally.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20-8-92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 32, Para No. 5.26)

The Committee have been informed that Telecom Tariffs have been kept low and are well below the whole-sale price index as on 1st July, 1990. The Committee have also been informed that the rentals for flat rate exchanges which mainly serve the rural areas have been left at the level where they were in 1982 while the tariff for Measured Rate Exchange (MRE) has been revised on three occasions since then. The Committee were also informed as to how tariff structure has been designed to be selective in imposing lesser burden on deserving target groups like press, educational institutions etc. The Committee were also informed that the Department is taking all necessary measures to keep tariff low through modernisation, higher productivity and better staff telephone ratio. The contention of the Department about telecom tariffs being low notwithstanding the Committee have been inclined to believe that these are not

based on a rational cost plus formula. The Committee, therefore, enquired from the Department about the basis on which the tariff structure has been worked out. In this context, the information furnished to the Committee in regard to costs of local calls, ISD calls, Telephone rentals, telegram rates leaves them unconvinced about the correctness of the tariffs fixed by the Department.

The Committee find that as against the cost of Rs. 27.30 per minute of ISD calls to the Department the tariff charged is Rs. 40.48 per minute. Similarly, as against costs of call of 63 paise actual tariff is Rs. 0.80/call upto 1000 calls and Rs. 1.10 paise/call in excess of 1000 calls. *The Committee would like the Department to rationalise the tariff structure of telecommunication facilities on the basis in order to facilitate fixation of tariff on a realistic basis.*

Action Taken

The amount payable by the telephone subscriber comprises not merely the call charges but rentals as well. At the existing level of charges for rentals, we are not able to fully recover the costs incurred in providing the service. The recovery is still lower from the rural areas where the call revenue too is very meagre. Such costs, therefore, have to be recovered from elsewhere. The call charges cannot, therefore, be viewed in isolation.

While different methods give varying results, our calculations show that the cost per call on replacement cost basis would be Re. 1.52 and Re. 0.91 on historical cost basis. These include the element of under-recovery of rental cost and also the cost of permitted free calls.

As regards the International calls; the cost has been based on 86-87 figures. Even without making the costs current; the revised Rupee-dollar parity alone brings the cost to Rs. 52.44 per minute.

It may not also be possible for the Telecom Commission to fix the tariff on cost basis alone. Factors like the value of service rendered, cross-subsidisation of other Telecom. services such as Telegraphs and Long Distance Public Telephones, generation of resources for rural telecom network, Development and Expansion will also have to be given due weightage at the time of fixation of tariff. the recommendations of the Committee will, however, be kept in mind while revising the tariffs in future.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 39, Para No. 5.33)

The Committee were also informed that one of the reasons for outstanding dues was insufficiency of staff. The Committee hardly need to stress upon the Department the desirability of sorting out such administrative powers.

Action Taken

The C.G.Ms have been given full powers to sanction staff based on norms and within the ceiling limits. The real solution lies in computerisation of TRA works, so that manpower is contained. However, there are surplus telephone operators due to shut down of manual and electromechanical exchanges and introduction of STD on a mass scale. Such surplus T.O. can be given a change of cadre of TOA and thus the immediate problem can be solved. Moreover, O/T is also incurred to dispose of the arrears expeditiously.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Sl. No. 2, Para No. 1.32)

They are inclined to think that telecommunication by itself is an extensive and self-contained field which require a treatment independent of other modes of Communication. However, necessary linkages between Department of Telecommunications and other communication agencies should appropriately be reflected in the Telecommunications Policy which may be placed before the House.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that a formal policy document on telecommunication will be adopted without any further delay.

Action Taken

A draft 'Telecommunications Policy' has been prepared taking into consideration the views expressed by other communication agencies, industry and business community etc. The comments of the various Ministries have been called for on the draft 'Telecommunications Policy' before seeking approval of the Cabinet.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para No. 2.41)

The Committee find that the targets of 7th Plan pertaining to providing of subscriber dialling facilities, Long Distance Public Telephones and in the field of Coaxial, Microwave, Ultra High Frequency Systems, Optical fibre etc. could not be achieved due to various reasons viz. non-availability of equipments from indigenous sources, delay in obtaining approval for import and indigenous manufacture, poor and inadequate supply of equipments from the manufacturers etc.

Action Taken

There is no specific recommendations by Estimates Committees in this Para. However, observations of the Committee have been noted. All out efforts are being made to coordinate and arrange availability of equipment

on indigenous sources or by imports so as to meet the targets set for the future plans.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para No. 2.42)

In their Sixty-ninth Report (8th Lok Sabha) on Telecommunication Services in the Rural Areas, the Estimates Committee had deprecated the conscious non-correlation of physical targets with plan allocations and consequential fixation of unrealistic targets. The Committee are constrained to note that notwithstanding the recommendations of its predecessor committee, the Department of Telecommunications have failed to bring in the required degree of realistic planning and expansion of Telecom services. Even during the 7th Plan the target for LDPTs had to be brought down from original level of 15,000 to 9,720 due to difficulties in the supply of equipment. Obviously, such drastic scaling down of targets could have been avoided had equipment supply position been assessed realistically.

Action Taken

The Department has endeavoured a conscious correlation of physical targets with Plan allocations and consequential fixation of realistic targets. During 1991-92, a target of covering 12,000 Panchayat Villages with telephone facility was fixed against which 21,752 Panchayat Villages were provided with telephone facility. Similarly in the year 1992-93, a target of covering 36,500 Panchayat Villages has been fixed, which is commensurate with annual Plan allocation of Rs. 456 crores and expected availability of equipments.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/92-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 6, Para No. 2.43)

The Committee find that the equipment supply during 8th Plan was being augmented by adopting various indigenous technologies and production of these in private as well as public sector. However, the Committee are concerned to note that even though 14 firms in private and public sector have been given license for production of various types of equipment required for providing LDPTs, actually only one company has succeeded in production. The Committee, therefore, cannot but infer that this state of affairs is indicative of Lackadaisical attitude of the Department in implementing its plans. The Committee, strongly emphasise once again the utmost need for formulating the realistic plans, fixing targets within an achievable range and vigorous action for successful implementation of such plans. The Committee also urge that short fall in meeting the requirements under various components of the plan *i.e.* Coaxial Cables, Microwave and UHF Systems and Optical Fibre etc. should be fully met during the 8th Plan. They also desire that Government to ensure that production of

equipment for which licences have already been granted to public and private sector firms should be taken up expeditiously.

Action Taken

Under the new industrial policy announced by the Govt. in July 91, production of all types of telecommunication equipment have been delicensed. Telecom equipment have also been included in the list of priority industries for automatic approval of foreign technology agreements involving foreign equity upto 51% and technology payments upto Rs. 1 crore. With the introduction of this policy a number of new production units are expected to be set up during the 8th Plan period. The production group set up under the telecom commission is also closely monitoring various purchase for which licences were earlier issued as well as new purchase proposed under the liberal industrial policy. With these measures it is expected that the requirements of various types of telecommunication equipments will be met during the 8th Plan period.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 20, Para No. 3.59)

The Committee have been informed about position of various types of equipment for switching and transmission purposes besides the subscribers 'end' equipment. The Committee are happy to note that the telephone instruments are being produced today by 10 companies and there is a capacity to produce 40 lakh telephone instruments a year as against the current capacity utilisation upto 10 lakh instruments. The Committee cannot but express its concern over the excess capacity which has been created. They nevertheless hope that such capacity as is excess to the minimum requirements of the country will not be allowed to remain idle. **They, therefore, expect the Government to launch the concerted drive for export of telephone instruments. The Committee would also like Department to maintain the highest quality and standards of instruments being so manufactured so that complaints on this account are minimised.**

Action Taken

The Department of Telecom has set up a steering Committee to promote export of Telecom equipment including instruments and services. The exports of telephone instrument in 91-92 has been to the tune of Rs. 5.79 crores. All telephone instruments procured by the Department are subjected to Quality assurance tests and accepted only when they meet the quality standards.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 22, Para No. 3.61)

The Committee are apprised in the area of the transmission equipment, C-DOT has already developed a number of rural transmission products which are being manufacture. In this the Committee are dismayed to noted that the proposal for manufacture of digital UHF equipment with imported technology which have been under consideration of Government since 1985 has finally been dropped considering the status of indigenous technology in this area. While the Committee welcome the import substitution efforts in technology they are left with a feeling of disquiet over the manner in which Government has been dragging on the matter disregarding the fact that Telecom today is a rapidly changing field and also the acute demand for Telecom services in the country. The Committee desire that in future proposals should be mooted in tune with reasonable long perspective and decisions taken quickly.

Action Taken

With the recent changes in the industrial policy foreign collaboration have been permitted with the automatic approval procedures. With this change it is expected that telecom transmission equipment with state of the art technology will become available to the Department for meeting the rapidly changing requirements of telecom users.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 23, Para No. 3.62)

The Committee note that production capacities of ITI units at Mankapur and Palghat are being upgraded to meet the requirement of electronic switching system. They, however, note that there will be still a gap left between demand and supply which will be met through private manufacturers. The Committee are seriously concerned to note shortages of large switching systems which have hindered expansion and modernisation of Telecom services in larger urban centre thus depriving the department of much needed revenue. The Committee understand that indigenous technology for manufacture of larger switching system has not been developing as fast as could be desired and that the Government proposes to fill the gap by relying on French C/T ALCATEL product for sometime. The Committee recommend that delay in expansion of servives should not be allowed to come in the way of expansion and modernising telecom services in larger urban areas of substantial revenue potential.

Action Taken

DOT has drawn detailed plans for meeting the likely gap between availability of switching and transmission equipment for the 8th Five Year Plan. A number of large international companies have indicated their desire for setting up of production facilities for large switching equipment

in view of the liberal industrial policy announced by the Govt in July 1991. Four proposals, namely, M/s Ericsson, M/s Fujitsu, M/s Alcatel and M/s Siemens are in advanced stage of finalisation for switching production units. In the area of transmission equipment, technologies developed by C-DOT are being transferred to a number of Indian companies for productionisation. In addition, some of the international companies are also expected to set up manufacturing facilities for transmission equipment. With the materialisation of these plans, it is expected that the gap in the supply of transmission and switching equipment during the 8th Plan period will be met.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 24, Para No. 3.63)

The Committee also note that at present the annual license capacity for manufacture of cables by HCL (Hindustan Cables Limited) is just a little above the 50% of the actual annual requirement of the Department. The Committee would like to caution the Government about the likely gap between availability of switching and transmission equipment which can make targets for the 8th Five Year Plan unrealisable. The Committee, therefore, recommend that sufficient attention should be paid towards dovetailing the production capacities, of switching systems and the telephone cables in terms of quantities as well as technological capability.

Action Taken

Production capacities in the area of telephone cables existing with HCL (Hindustan Cables Ltd.) as well as other manufacturers both in the public and private sectors are sufficient to meet the requirements of DOT for the 8th Plan. In regard to switching capacities, action is already in hand to increase the production capacity for meeting the requirements of the 8th Plan. A number of proposals received from large international companies are in advanced stage of finalisation. Most of the new units being set up for manufacture of large switching systems are likely to produce switching equipment having latest technological capabilities. Department is paying sufficient attention towards dovetailing the production capacities of switching systems, transmission systems and telecommunication cables systems, transmission systems and telecommunication cables for meeting the 8th Five Year Plan requirements both in terms of quantities as well as in terms of technological capabilities.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 26 & 27, Para Nos. 3.65 & 3.66)

To achieve self sufficiency in the field of Telecommunication, building up of adequate Research and Development facilities is of paramount importance. The Committee are, however, constrained to note that the

present R&D facilities in the telecom sector are not adequate for the current needs despite the fact that there is no shortage of funds. The Department has stated that there is an acute shortage in the availability of indigenously produced electronic components of professional grade. LSI and VLSI chips required for modern telecom designs are also stated to be not available in the country.

3.66 The Committee strongly recommend that the Research and Development set up in the Department of Telecommunication should be strengthened to enable the Department to not only develop and update indigenous technology but also to accept and absorb latest foreign technology. The Committee also desire the Department to lend full financial and administrative support to R&D Units so as to be able to develop in the country a strong technological base in the field of telecommunications.

Action Taken

The Research and Development activities of the Telecommunication Sector are carried out through the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), R&D wings of manufacturing agencies such as ITI, BEL etc. and standardisation and type approval being carried out by the Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC). C-DOT, an autonomous organisation, is funded at present out of telecom revenues and so far a sum of Rs. 105/- crores has been made available to them for their various activities.

The major achievements of C-DOT are:

1. An excellent R&D infrastructure and trained manpower to take up design of advanced digital switching systems.
2. Creation of large indigenous base for production.
3. 128 Port Rural Automatic Exchanges-About 5000 such exchanges are operational in the country.
4. 512 Port Single Base Module Exchange-Over 75 exchanges are operational in DOT Network.
5. 10,000 lines MAX Exchanges-Three such exchanges are operational in DOT Network.

The new industrial policy has opened up tremendous opportunities for foreign investments and joint collaborations in the field of telecommunications. The responses are encouraging. It is expected that the availability of latest state-of-the-art technology will be possible within the country to meet its demand.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 36, Para No. 5.30)

The Department informed the Committee that an amount of Rs. 82.36 crores billed upto 31st March, 1989 was outstanding from the subscribers. The Committee are of the view that even though the outstanding bills constitute only 3% of the total amount billed, these are nevertheless of considerable magnitude considering the fact that outstanding bills in Rerspect of MTNL at Delhi and Bombay have not been taken into account. In this context the Committee are constrained to find that Department is facing problems in recovering the outstanding bills particularly in respect of dignitaries/Government Departments and on account of disputed cases pending in the courts and consumer councils. The Department has expressed its helplessness in making a headway in respect of outstanding bills relating to these categories.

Action Taken

1. The Department is making all out efforts to reduce the outstanding by issuing instructions, granting incentive to the staff who put the extra efforts to recover the old outstanding, as a result, the outstanding as on 31.3.1991 for the bills issued upto 31St March, 89 has been drastically reduced to Rs. 41.51 crores for Department of Telecom only and Rs. 74.40 crores including M.T.N.L.

2. As regards recovery of the dues from the dignitaries/Government Departments, it may be added tht many of the dignitaries find place in the list of telephones exempted for disconnection and the telephones of the Govt. departments which are engaged in maintaining law and order and essential services are also not disconnected. This slows down the process of recoveries. However efforts are made continuously to pursue these cases and concerned Government Departments by taking up the matter at higher levels. The settlement of the outstanding dues, lying in disputed cases in courts and consumer councils, depends upon the decisions of these courts/ consumer councils.

3. Instructions for grant of incentive for recovery of old telephone revenue dues, against closed connections has also been issued vide No.2-44/85-TR on 24.9.1990 the copy of which is enclosed. In addition to the issue of instructions, the recovery of outstanding ducs is also reviewed/ watched through Sub-Ledger Review Statement received from each unit every month.

Copy of letter No. 2-44/85-TR, dated 24 September 1990 issued to All Heads of Telecom Circles/Metro Distts./Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., and copy to the Director of Audit, P&T Delhi, All Directors/Jt. Directors of Audit/Director (IC)/Director (Inspection-T) Director (PFR)/ Director(TA)/Director(PHT) for information.

SUBJECT:— *Grant of incentive for recovery of old Telephone Revenue dues, against closed connections.*

Attention is invited to the instructions contained in this office letter No. 2-44/85-TR dated 24-12-86, in which the incentive scheme for making recovery of old outstanding telephone revenue dues was extended up to 31-3-1990. On a review of the scheme, it has been observed that the scheme is not being availed of adequately. Considering, however, that some incentive should be there for pursuit and recovery of old dues against closed connections, it has been decided to extend the incentive scheme for a further period of 4 years from 1-4-90.

The rates of incentive payable under this scheme are given below:—

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| (i) For recovery of dues over 10 years old (i.e., in the year 1990-91, the bills issued up to 1989-90) etc..... | 15% of amount recovered. |
| (ii) for recovery of dues between 5 to 10 years old (i.e., in the year 1990-91 the bills issued between 1-4-80 and 31-3-85) etc. | 10% of amount recovered. |
| (iii) For recovery of dues between 3 to 5 years old (i.e., in 1990-91, the bills issued between 1-4-85 and 31-3-87)..... | 5% of amount recovered. |

The main features of the scheme are re-iterated below:

- (a) The incentive is in the form of a reward, which is generally paid to outdoor staff i.e., Telephone Revenue Inspectors attached to Telephone Revenue units. The Telephone Inspectors attached to these units are also eligible for the reward.
- (b) If, for local reasons, the officer in-charge of the TRA Unit or Exchange deputes any other category of staff, e.g., Clerks/Sub-inspectors/Linemen, for the collection of such arrears, they too will be eligible for the reward under this scheme.
- (c) The incentive will be admissible only in respect of actual cash relisation on the outstanding bills and where the subscriber has not applied for restoration of the line.
- (d) The reward will not be admissible in cases of reduction of outstanding by adjustment, or by clearance of suspense against closed connections or such other means, or where the dues are paid up on disconnection of any other working telephone.
- (e) The maximum reward that can be granted in any one case will be

limited to Rs. 500/-. However, there will be no ceiling on the total amount that can be earned as reward by an individual.

- (f) The realisations from Government/Local Bodies/Government Corporations/Companies will not be included for assessment for the reward under this scheme.
- (g) In the cases in which the Department has filed a suit and obtained a decree, the reward will be admissible to the outdoor departmental staff who elicit information relating to the property etc. of the debtor, facilitating execution of the decree. The reward will, however, be payable only on realisation of the decreed amount.
- (h) The outdoor staff to whom this scheme will apply will not be entitled to any overtime allowance for the period concerned.

The effectiveness of the scheme may be watched by the Internal Financial Advisors after conducting a systematic review of old outstandings, as also the clearance of these outstandings under the incentive scheme. The results of such a review may be intimated to the Directorate alongwith the March Sub-Ledger accounts every year in the proforma indicated in the Annexure.

Member (F) desires that the information for the year 1988-89 and 1989-90 may be sent to this office by 30-9-90 positively as per the proforma enclosed.

Hindi version will follow.

SD/-
(RUCHIRA MUKERJEE)
Director (TR)

Name of the Circle_____

Statement of incentive paid during 19_____

	No. of cases	Amount
1. Outstanding over ten years old.		
(a) No. of cases and the amount outstanding at the beginning of the year_____	_____	_____
(b) No. of cases and the amount settled during the year_____		
(i) by recovery	_____	_____
(ii) by write off	_____	_____
(c) Incentive paid during the year_____	_____	_____
2. Outstanding over five years and up to ten years.		
(a) No. of cases, and the amount outstanding at the beginning of the year_____	_____	_____
(b) No. of cases, and the amount settled during the year.		
(i) by recovery	_____	_____
(ii) by write off	_____	_____
(c) Incentive paid during the year.	_____	_____
3. Outstanding over three years and up to five years.		
(a) No. of cases, and the amount outstanding at the beginning of the year_____	_____	_____

(b) No. of cases, and the amount settled during the year.

(i) by recovery

(ii) by write off

(c) Incentive paid during the year.

Total incentive
paid during the
year.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 37, Para No. 5.31)

The Committee have no reasons to agree with the contention of the Department of Telecommunications that they are not in a position to disconnect the telephones of Government Department which are not paying their dues. The Committee feel that a commercial Department like that of telephones cannot be faulted if they are constrained to disconnect even Government telephones for which bills are not being paid. *The Committee would like the Department of Telecommunications to vigorously pursue cases of outstanding bills with Government department concerned at a high level with a view to realising telephone dues as early as possible. To overcome this situation the Committee would like the Department to consider the feasibility of pruning down the list of dignitaries from the exempted list for disconnection of telephones for non-payment of dues. At the same time the Committee would like the Department to explore the possibility of obtaining advance deposits from Government offices and other large corporate bodies as also from the dignitaries on the basis of reasonable average of billing made over a past period. The actual charges can then be adjusted against such an advance.* This the Committee believe, will also obviate the need for arm twisting for enforcing recovery of outstanding dues.

Action Taken

(a) To pursue the cases of outstanding bills with Government Department concerned at High level vigorously and to realise telephone dues as early as possible, all the Heads of Circles have been advised vide this office letter No. 23-93/91-TR dated 13-2-1992, in this respect

(b) As regards considering of pruning down the list of dignitaries from exempted list for disconnection of telephones for non-payment of telephone dues, it is stated that the Department considers the dignitaries proposed for inclusion in the exempted category after detailed examination of the essentiality. The factors such as status of the official & Administrative functions etc., are also seen before considering the official for inclusion in the exempted category. Further the table of Rank & Precedence approved by the President of India is also referred to. At present there are only 34 dignitaries in the list. This may be seen from the list that dignitaries holding high rank/holding judicial powers, performing the administrative important functions are only included in the list. However the Committee's suggestion will be kept in view while considering fresh proposals for inclusion in the exempted list for disconnection in future. Further the procedure for follow up action on exempted category telephones has already been prescribed in para-186 of Telecommunications Manual Volume XIV. As per the procedure, the written reminders are issued to the paying officer regularly every month. The position is reviewed every quarter & quarterly list of bills of each telephone is sent to

the paying officer with a special request for expeditious settlement. At the same time the matter is brought to the personal notice of the PS to the V.I.P. for whom the telephone is working.

(c) As regards obtaining the advance deposits from Government offices with a view to obviate enforcing recovery of outstanding dues, the Govt. Departments may avail the facility of Voluntary Deposit Scheme which is already in practice, under which subscriber (including Government subscriber) may make sufficient advance to the Department adjustable in ensuing bills (para No. 215-B(3) of Telecommunication Manual Vol. XIV Pt.-I). In addition to the above scheme, A.O.(TR) is vested with powers to call for the Security Deposit of such amounts as he may consider necessary from the existing defaulting subscribers. Such deposits collected be refunded if the A.O.(TR) is satisfied about paying habits or financial soundness after 3 years. [Para 215-B(5) *ibid*].

Copies of the following instructions are enclosed for reference.

- (1) No. 23-93/92-TR dated 13-2-1992 Liquidation of arrears of telephone dues against Government Departments.
- (2) 2-2/89-TR dated 1-3-1989 List of telephones exempted from disconnection for non-payment of dues.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, dt. 20-8-92]

Govt. of India
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
Sanchar Bhawan, 20-Ashoka Road,
New Delhi-1.

No. 23-93/91-TR

Dated 13-2-1992.

To

All Heads of Telecom Circles/Telephone Districts

SUBJECT:— *Liquidation of arrears of telephone dues against Government Departments.*

The Estimate Committee on the Ministry of Communications Department of Telecom has observed in its fourth report that outstanding of telephone bills against Government Departments *i.e.* State Govt., Central Govt. & Defence has mounted tremendously Commercial Department like that of telephones cannot be faulted if they are constrained to disconnect even Government telephones for which bills are not being paid and Committee has also desired to vigorously pursue cases of outstanding bills with Government department concerned at high level with a view to realising telephone dues as early as possible.

It has been noticed that at the end of October, 91 the telephone dues outstanding against Government Departments stands at Rs. 97 crores out of total outstanding of Rs. 653 crores which comes to 14.85% of total outstanding. This figure of outstanding is quiet alarming and needs a personal attention of Heads of Circles.

It is required that a list of outstanding amounts, department-wise with all details are prepared and matter is taken up with each department at high level with a view to realise the outstandings as early as possible.

Your compliance report with the actions to be taken in future to reduce the outstanding further may kindly be sent to this office by 21-2-92 positively.

The receipt of this letter may kindly be acknowledged.

Sd/-
(MUKESH MATHUR)
Director (TR)

Copy for information and necessary action to:—

1. CAO/IFA, Telecom Circles/Metro Distts./MTNL, Bombay and Delhi.

COPY

Govt. of India
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
Sanchar Bhawan, 20-Ashoka Road,
New Delhi-1.

No. 2-2/89-TR

Dated 1st March, 1989.

To

All Chief General Managers, Telecom Circles/Metro Districts and M.T.N.L., New Delhi/Bombay.

SUB:—List of telephones exempted from disconnection for non-payment of dues.

Attention is invited to the instructions contained in this office's letters No. 2-32/73-TR dated 8-3-79, 26-12-79 and 18-7-85 on the subject indicated above.

It has now been decided to exempt the official telephones of the Chairman/Vice-Chairman, Members, and Registrars, of the Central Administrative Tribunals, from disconnection for non-payment of dues in addition to the telephones in the exempted category as per the existing list. It may kindly be ensured that these telephones are not in future listed for disconnection for the non-payment of dues. As up-to-date list of telephones exempted from disconnection due to non-payment of dues is enclosed for information and necessary action.

Necessary corrections to para 164-A of the P&T Manual Volume XIV will be issued separately.

Hindi Version will follow.

Sd/-
(RUCHIRA MUKERJEE)
Director(TR)

Copy to:

1. Director (PHE)/Director (IC)/Inspection (T) for information.

2. A.O.(TR-II) alongwith 5 copies for issue of necessary correction lists.
3. Spare.

Sd/-
(RUCHIRA MUKERJEE)
Director(TR)

COPY

**LIST OF HIGH DIGNITARIES WHOSE OFFICIAL TELEPHONES
ARE EXEMPTED FROM DISCONNECTIONS**

1. President of India (including telephones in Rashtrapati Bhavan);
2. Vice-President of India, Prime Minister and all Heads of State and Union Territories;
3. Former Presidents;
4. Honourable Chief Justice of India;
5. Speaker of Lok Sabha/Chairman of Rajya Sabha;
6. All Ministers, Deputy Ministers of Government of India and all Chief Ministers & Ministers in State Government, Deputy Chief Ministers of State Government;
7. Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission;
8. Leaders of opposition in the Rajya Sabha & the Lok Sabha;
9. Ambassadors Extra-ordinary and Plenipotentiary and High Commissioners of Commonwealth-Countries accredited to India;
10. Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha;
11. Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha;
12. Honourable Judges of Supreme Court of India;
13. Members of the Planning Commission;
14. Comptroller & Auditor General of India;
15. Speaker, State Legislature Assembly;
16. Chairman, Legislative Council;
17. Chairman, Regional Committee;
18. Honourable Chief Justice, High Courts;
19. Honourable Judges, High Courts;
20. Registrars of Supreme Court of India;
21. Registrars of State High Courts;
22. Chief Executive Councillor of Delhi;
23. Government Dy. Chief Whip, Rajya Sabha (I.C.C.);
24. Government Dy. Chief Whip, Lok Sabha;
25. Government Dy. Chief Whip, Rajya Sabha;
26. Government Dy. Chief Whip, Incharge Assurances;
27. Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on large Industrial Houses;

28. Lokayukta in State Governments;
29. All Secretaries to Government of India and State Government and Secretary to the Governor's Secretariat;
30. Commissioner in State Secretariats;
31. The Commissioner of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes;
32. Leaders of opposition of all the State Legislatures;
33. Chief of the Army Staff/Naval Staff/and the Air Staff;
34. Chairman/Vice-Chairman, Members and Registrars of the Central Administrative Tribunals.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 41, Para No. 6.19)

The Committee are of the firm view that as a service industry, it is incumbent upon Department of Telecommunications (DOT) to provide maximum consumer satisfaction to its subscribers, whether it is in billing, fault-repair or prevention of misuse of STD. They wish to emphasise the point that the Department being a supplier in a service industry, the evident dis-satisfaction between the Department and the subscribers indicates that the service being provided is not satisfactory. *The Committee, therefore reiterate that it is imperative to provide operational satisfaction to-consumers and Department of Telecommunication must gear itself to achieve this goal optimally.*

Action Taken

The customer dis-satisfaction as reflected by the complaints received mainly relate to :

- (i) Fault Repair Service.
- (ii) Billing Complaints
- (iii) Non-availability of service in rural areas.

As regards fault repair service, the aim of the Department is to achieve a figure of 90% in the restoration of faults within 24 hours. Sometimes it may not be possible mainly because of faults caused to underground cables through digging of the roads by other utility services, restoration of which takes a long time. The Department has a scheme of laying maximum number of cables in ducts which are less prone to faults through digging.

As regards excess billing complaints, in all the electronic exchanges detailed billing particulars of STD calls are given to subscribers so that they are in a position to check the correctness of the bills. In addition, in E-10B type electronic exchanges which have been introduced in a large scale, the subscribers are given the facility to control the STD calls through the dynamic locking facility. This prevents the possibility of anyone making STD calls without giving the secret pass word which is known only to the subscriber.

As regards complaints in rural areas, the problem is more complex since the Department is totally dependent on power supply from the State Electricity Supply Authorities. Prolonged interruptions in power supply and poor voltage regulation which take place quite regularly in rural areas cause disruption to telecom services. Though the Department provides standby power supply through battery sets, these can take care of interruptions only upto about 6 hours. Some experiments in the use of solar power are being carried out. Nevertheless, endeavour is being made consistent with financial resources available to improve the quality of service in rural areas by large scale induction of electronic exchanges, provision of long distance public call offices and trunk circuits through Radio systems which are highly reliable compared to open wire lines which are subject to interruptions in bad weather, thefts etc.

To sum up, it may be seen that it has been the endeavour of the Department to improve the services. Significant improvement in the quality of service has been achieved through introduction of electronic exchanges which are highly reliable and also through replacement of trunk circuits on reliable media like Microwave, Optical Fibre etc. Internal Monitoring of the quality of service is done through monthly reports on all parametres included in the Mission 'Better Communications' which was launched in the year, 1986. This is continuing. In addition to this, the Department also has system of assessing the quality of service provided to subscribers from the point of view of the user. This appraisal is carried out by an independent agency (earlier it was done by the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad and is now being done by Indian Market Research Bureau) and this covers 48 important cities in the country which constitute about 70% of the equipped capacity.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91—B, date 20-8-92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 45, Para No. 6.23)

In this context the Committee note that department has a stringent procedure laid down for testing on a daily basis whether all Public Call Offices (PCOs) are working properly. The Committee are however, constrained to find that there is no effective monitoring to ensure that PCOs are actually working satisfactorily.

Action Taken

In the whole country there are more than 1.36 lakh Public Call Offices (PCOs) and as indicated to the Committee stringent procedure has been laid down for testing them on a daily basis to ensure that they are working properly. The monitoring is done at the Headquarters through exception reports. Recently, we have included a parameter on restoration of P.Ts within 24 hours in the monthly statement which is received from all the Telecom Circles. A copy of the MQ. 01 form is enclosed.

In order to ensure that the Public Telephones remain in working

conditions we are increasingly going in for manned public telephones both local and STD types. The person operating the telephone gets a commission on the earnings and thus has strong interest to ensure that his telephone is in working order. The Rural LDPTs are also being provided in Panchayat Offices or other places where the user has interest in ensuring that these are working properly. It is expected that this reform will ensure that public telephones will remain in working order and the restoration also will be quicker.

Further, a very large number of public telephones are being provided so that public may not feel inconvenience if few of them remain out of order due to vandalism/misuse since many alternate PTs are available in the neighbourhood.

This has the approval of Chairman, Telecom Commission.

(Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B, date 20-8-92)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 47, Para No. 6.25)

The Committee are also dismayed to note that only 47% of local calls mature at the first instance. The Committee hope that the Department would look into this matter and take appropriate steps to ensure a higher percentage of 'calls-matured'.

[Fourth Report of the Estimates Committee of Lok Sabha Sectt. Para No. 6.26]

Action Taken

As pointed out in Para 6.15, the figure of 47% is for the call success rate on live traffic, which is considered satisfactory. This is the actual number of calls answered and does not include incompletely dialled calls abandoned in the middle, subscriber found busy, apart from congestion in the network. It is seen that about 30% of the subscribers are tested busy which are the major causes of low figure. Even as per CCITT standard, the figure of call success rate of the order of 60% is considered to be good. We are able to achieve this figure in some stations but the overall All India figure is lower, on account of those cities where major part of the network is still non-electronic and is subjected to heavy congestion, on account of fast growing demand for telephone services.

This has the approval of Chairman, Telecom Commission.

(Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT ARE AWAITED

Recommendation (Sl. No. 3, Para No. 1.33)

The Committee have been informed that the Indian Telegraph Act which governs the provision of telecom. services has undergone a process of amendment repeal and adoption in order to make its basic philosophy and objects compatible with the present telecom. scenario and that the provisions of the Act do not come in the way of technological development in this sector. They have also been apprised that the Act permits and aids the role of telecommunications as a propellant of growth and promoter of exports etc. They have also been further informed that with the advent of cable TV technology does, not call for any major changes in the Act. At the same time, the Secretary, Department of Telecommunications did not rule out modifications in the Act in the light of a formal telecommunications policy to be adopted by the Government in future.

The Committee recommend that the Indian Telegraph Act should be kept under constant review, and modified, as and when changes in the technology, expansion of telecom. network and introduction of new services so warrant. The Committee would also like to advise the Department to review the Act from a futuristic perspective so that it continues to remain an instrument of growth and is not permitted to become an impediment at any stage.

Action Taken

Observations noted. A Committee has already been appointed under the Chairmanship of Shri D.N. Nanda, retd. Member (Production), Telecom. Commission to comprehensively review the Indian Telegraph Act and suggest changes where necessary. The Committee is expected to submit its report shortly.

(Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 7, Para No. 2.44)

The Committee note that even against modest expectation of providing a net work of 20 million telephones for a population of 800; millions in the country there are at present only 5 million telephones in India. This indicates an imbalance of 400% between demand and supply. Even though in recent years the Department of telecommunications has achieved a net addition of 0.3 to 0.4 million Direct Exchange Lines (DELs), the waiting

list for telephones has actually grown by 33% over the same period; in fact it has continued to grow over the successive Five Year Plans in spite of regular expansion in the telephone services. The Department of Telecommunications hopes to achieve a switching capacity of 111 lakh lines as against the estimated demand of 110 lakh lines at the end of Eighth Plan. This coupled with installation of 1.88 lakh public call offices in the rural areas, is expected to give India and all-nation connectivity. The Committee are dismayed to find that the Planning apparatus in the country has failed to take note of almost persistent and growing gap between the demand and supply of telephone services in the country. They are also dismayed by the fact that the developmental spin-off of telecom. Services has not been fully appreciated so far. The Committee strongly recommend that the Planning process in future should set fight this kind of distortion.

Action Taken

Noted

The observations of the Committee were forwarded to the Planning Commission for needful. the present position has been explained in the Action Taken Notes relating to Para 1.31.

(Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 8, Para 2.45)

The Committee note that providing Telecommunication services is an expensive proposition in as much as every additional telephone requires an investment of Rs. 30,000/-. On the other hand, it has the potential of generating the revenue for exceeding the required investment. In this context the Committee were informed that it is an established fact that an investment of one dollar in rural communication, ultimately generated a return of five dollars. The Committee are surprised to find that these facts appeared to have been over-looked by the Planning Commission while allocating resources for expansion of Telecommunication services. The Committee depreciate the fact that level of investment in this vital sector has ranged from 2 to 3% and that even during the 7th Five year plan, plan allocations fell way behind the required investment. Even though the ultimate investment during the 7th plan (Rs. 81.22 crores) was twice what had been initially allocated, the additional resources were raised through non-budgetary support. The Committee are constrained to note that even during the 8th Five Year Plan when the Telecommunication sector is at a take-off stage and fully capable of meeting all its financial requirements through internal generation of revenues, the Planning Commission appears to be unappreciative of the need to give Telecommunication services its deserved importance and priority.

The committee were informed that if investment in the Telecom. Sector during the 8th Plan is not allowed upto the minimum required level of Rs. 20,000 crores, it would have serious implications not only on the future growth potential of the Telecom sector, but will also inhibit growth in other sectors of economy. The Committee were also informed that in case investments upto the required level were permitted at this stage, the Department of Telecommunication would be in a position to not only meet an investment level of Rs. 30,000 crores but would also be able to generate a surplus of 17,000 crores. The Committee desire that the Government should take due note of these projections and raise plan allocation for telecommunications from proposed Rs. 14,000 crores to the required level of Rs. 20,000 crores.

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee were forwarded to the Planning Commission for needful. The present position has been explained in the Action Taken Notes relating to Para 1.31.

(Deptt. of Telecommunications OM. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 9, Para No. 2.46)

The Committee find that Tele-Communication Sector has considerable potential for generating sufficient resources for meeting its expansion programmes. They have also been informed that at present the Government is transferring revenue earning services from this sector to other Sectors of economy. The Committee are unable to appreciate why a sector which is capable of standing on its own is not permitted to become self-supportive so as to be able to generate greater resources at a subsequent stage. While they appreciate the resource crunch that underpins the entire planning process, the Committee strongly feel that an important service like Tele-Communication ought to be given all encouragement to achieve a high degree of self-financing and, for this purpose, the resources generated by it need to be ploughed back if the yawning gap between demand and supply for Tele-Com. Services is to be bridged.

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee were forwarded to the Planning Commission for needful. The present position has been explained in the Action Taken Notes relating to Para 1.31.

(Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/B dt. 20.8.92)

Recommendations (Sl. No. 11, Para No. 2.48)

The Committee also recommend that the Government should immediately review the financial relationship between the General Revenues and the Telecom. Department. In this context, the Committee are inclined to support the plea of the Deptt. of Telecommunications that

they ought to be treated at par with Railways in the matter of payment of dividend and retention of revenues for internal use.

Action Taken

Noted.

With reference to the latest position of dividend relief available to Railways, the financial relationship between the General Revenue and Telecom. Department has been reviewed. The underlying general principle behind granting dividend relief to Railways seems to be to consider those services for relief which are unremunerative and rendered more to serve a social purpose rather than the commercial interests of the Railways. Applying this principle one of the segments of telecom. services which should qualify for dividend relief is rural services. For consideration of this issue a case has been made out and sent to Ministry of Finance. This has the approval of Member (F).

(Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 12, Para No. 3.51)

The present organisational structure of Telecommunication Department has been devised to meet the requirements of development, operation and maintenance of countrywide telecommunication infrastructure. The Telecom. Commission is an apex level body for overall formulation and implementation of policy relating to Telecom. services. The necessary interface with the Government is achieved through the Department of Telecommunication; the Chairman of the Telecom. Commission being simultaneously designated as Secretary, Department of Telecommunications. The Commission functions through various telecommunication circles and Government undertakings like Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited, I.T.I., H.T.L. etc. The Commission has been given wide financial and administrative powers.

Action Taken

This is a statement of facts, hence accepted.

(Telecom Commission O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 11.12.92)

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 13, 14, & 15, Para Nos. 3.52, 3.53 & 3.54)

The Committee note that as part of the exercise to restructure the Telecom organisation, while the Telecom Board was replaced by Telecom Commission, at the same time two major revenue generating Telecom Circles viz. Delhi and Bombay, were converted w.e.f. 1st April, 1986, into a Limited Company called Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. The purpose of creating MTNL was to upgrade the quality of Telecom Service, expand telecom network and raise financial resources for further expansion and improvement. In this context, the Committee's attention has also been drawn to a comparative study made by Administrative Staff College of Hyderabad in respect of the telecom services in four metropolitan telecom

circles of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras. It has surprised the Committee that, according to the above study telecom services in Madras and not in Bombay or Delhi, have been adjudged the best. The Committee therefore find it least surprising that serious doubts about the wisdom of creating MTNL have cropped up in recent years.

The Committee have been informed that creation of MTNL has not only resulted in difficulties in cross-subsidisation of finances for improving and expanding the service in low revenue earning areas, particularly in those telecom circles which cater mostly to rural areas but at the same time a substantial part of revenue generated through telecom operations in Delhi and Bombay now invites corporate tax liability. A not unexpected fallout of this arrangement has been a certain wage disparity between staff working in MTNL and those working in other telecom circles. Apprehensions about a steep rise in the Wage Bill as well as other factors mentioned above have inhibited the Department from bringing more telecom operations under the MTNL pattern. In these circumstances the Committee are inclined to believe that experiment of creating MTNL has had an inherent limitations thus limiting its impact. The MTNL pattern therefore appear to promise no solution to the problem of reducing demand and supply imbalances in the telecom sector.

The Committee have been informed that a high level body has been set up to go into the question of reorganising telecom services *de novo* with specific reference to future status of MTNL. In this context the Committee are constrained to note that within a period of 8 years i.e. from 1983 to 1991 restructuring of the Department is being contemplated for the fourth time. The Committee deprecate the state of impermanency that seems to have seized the organisation which is expected to serve this vital sector. The Committee's disquiet is accentuated further because they firmly believe that it is telecom sector which can help the country in leaping into the 21st century. The Committee hope that the latest Expert Committee which is going into the reorganisation of Telecom Services will not overlook limited advantages of adopting MTNL pattern. They also desire that while considering the question of further restructuring Telecom Department the Government should not overlook the lessons learnt in past. The Committee would also like the Government to ensure that any fresh restructuring is given sufficient period to achieve the expected results before any further review is ordered.

Action Taken

The observations/recommendations made by the Estimates Committee have been noted. These will be kept in view while taking decisions on the recommendations of the High Level Committee (Athreya Committee) set up for recommending the most appropriate organisational structure for the Telecom Department.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20-8-92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 17, para No. 3.56)

The Committee note that the Department of Telecommunications has been issuing licences for establishing dedicated telecommunication networks to bulk users like Defence, Railways, Banks, Airlines, etc. The Committee expect that in view of expanding information industry and growth in the other sector of economy the demand for such networks is expected to increase in coming years. Expectedly, this calls for greater investments. However, the present resources position in the country underlines the need to optimise utilisation of existing networks. In this context, the Committee have been informed that under the present norms bulk users can operate only within their own network and cannot share their traffic with the public network. The Committee believe this factor can come in the way of optimum utilisation of all available networks which may on the one hand generate demand for expansion of such networks and at the same time inhibit the Department from encouraging establishment of such network owing to resource constraints. *The Committee, recommend that in order to reduce load on public network and to optimise utilisation of dedicated networks the proposal to allow bulk users to connect their networks with the public network should be readily approved by the Government. The Committee desire the Department to take an early decision in the matter.*

Action Taken

Proposal to allow interconnection of Private network to Public data network is being examined comprehensively from all relevant angles.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.N. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.92]

Recommendations (Sl. No. 21, Para No. 3.60)

The Committee note that a large number of private manufacturers have been issued licences for manufacturer of payphones, cordless telephones and FAX machines. The Committee also note that many of these companies have yet to start production. The Committee hope that, as pointed out above, the Department of Telephones will take upon itself the role of nurturing the fledgeling units so that they are able to contribute in not only developing the telecom sector but also in optimal utilisation of nation's resources.

Action Taken

There is no specific recommendations by the Estimate Committee in this Para. However, observations of the Committee have been noted. All our efforts are being made to develop vendors for supply of Department of Telecom or user's equipments required for telecommunications.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.N. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20-8-92]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 29, Para No. 4.18)

4.18 The Committee welcome the idea of setting up of rural telecom Corporations for rapid expansion of telecom services in rural areas. Such

an arrangement is also expected to mitigate the problem of resource mobilisation for the purpose of promoting rural telecommunications. The Committee strongly urge the Government to carefully study the pros and cons of this suggestion.

Action Taken

The 'Rural Telecom corporation' has been under consideration with a view to achieving rapid expansion of Telecom services in rural areas and generating required resources for this Sector. In the meantime. The Department has proposed to set up a "Telecom Finance Corporation" to help raise resources for the entire Telecom Sector including Rural areas.

The proposal from Department of Telecommunications for Finance Corporation is under active consideration.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications O.M. No. 27-10/91-B dt. 20.8.93]

Recommendations (Sl. No. 43, Para No. 6.21)

The Committee also find that Department has undertaken computerised billing and has fixed targets for the same. They feel that this will help in removing the complaints of subscribers to a considerable extent. The Department of Telecommunication, nevertheless, should strengthen its vigilance machinery and evolve a foolproof system of supervision to remove the existing nexus between telephone staff and unscrupulous elements indulging in misuse of STD facility. The Committee recommend that the Department should take strong and visible punitive action against such erring staff found guilty of connivance. The Committee would also like the Department to take stern action on all complaints of malpractices and ensure a very high level of consumer satisfaction. The Committee also desire that high level officers of Department of Telecommunications should listen to the grievances of the subscribers as and when they visit a particular state.

Action Taken

The following steps have been taken:

(a) A number of joint raids were conducted alongwith C.B.I. Officers at Delhi, Bombay, Ahmedabad, etc, prevent fraudulent use of STD/ISD calls. In appropriate cases, disciplinary proceedings have been initiated. More than a dozen cases have been registered with C.B.I.

(b) An amendment in the Indian Telegraph Act has been proposed to provide deterrent penalty for the beneficiaries of diversion of telephone lines leading to the leakage of telephone revenue. The case for introducing a Bill in the monsoon session of Parliament for the purpose is under process.

(c) 120 Vigilance Officers, Inquiry Officers and Presiding Officers were trained in the Departmental Training Centres as well as in the training centre of CBI.

(d) Sanction has also been accorded by the Department to the CBI for creating four cells exclusively for detection of frauds leading to the leakage of telephone revenue.

(e) Action has been taken to strengthen the Vigilance Cell in the Directorate and in the field units.

(f) Attention to the grievances of the subscribers, by the high level officers of the Department will be ensured by their participation in Telephone Adalats, Open House Sessions and Meetings with the members of public during their visits outstation.

[Deptt. of Telecommunications F. No. 27-10/91-B, Dated 20.8.92]

NEW DELHI;

March 26, 1993

Chaitra 5, 1915(S)

MANORANJAN BHAKTA

Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

(Vide Introduction of the Report)

Analysis of Action Taken by Government of the 4th Report of Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha)

Total number of Recommendations	48
I. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government (Sl. Nos. 1, 4, 16, 18, 19, 25, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46 and 48).	
Total	18
Percentage	37.5%
II. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies (Sl. Nos. 10, 32 and 39)	
Total	3
Percentage	6.2%
III. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee (Sl. Nos. 2, 5, 6, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 36, 37, 41, 45 and 47).	
Total	14
Percentage	29.2%
IV. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies are still awaited (Sl. Nos. 3, 7,8,9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 29 and 43).	
Total	13
Percentage	27.1%

PART II

MINUTES OF THE 27TH SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (TENTH LOK SABHA HELD ON 16TH MARCH, 1993)

The Committee sat from 1500 hours to 1625 hours

2. The following were present in the sitting of the Committee:—

- Shri Manoranjan Bhakta —*Chairman*
2. Shri Somjibhai Damor
 3. Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar
 4. Shrimati Girija Devi
 5. Shri Nurul Islam
 6. Dr. Viswanatham Kanithi
 7. Shri Manjay Lal
 8. Shri Hannan Mollah
 9. Shri G. Devaraya Naik
 10. Shri Rupchand Pal
 11. Shri Sriballav Panigrahi
 12. Shri Harish Narayan Prabhu Zantye
 13. Shri Amar Roy Pradhan
 14. Shri Moreshwar Save
 15. Shri Manabendra Shah
 16. Shri Mahadeepak Singh Shakya
 17. Shri Manku Ram Sodhi

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri B. B. Pandi — *Director*
2. Shri K. L. Anand—*Under Secretary*
3. Shri R. C. Gupta—*Assistant Director*

3. The Committee considered and adopted the following Draft Reports:—

- (i) * * * * *
- (ii) * * * * *

(iii) Draft Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 4th Report of Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha) relating to the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) — Telecommunication was considered by the Committee and the same was adopted subject to amendments/modifications given in Annexure.

4. The Committee also authorised the Chairman to make other consequential changes arising out of factual verifications by the respective Ministries and present the same to the House.

The Committee then adjourned.

ANNEXURE

**Amendments/Modifications made by Estimates Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha)
in Draft Report on Telecommunications**

Page No.	Para No.	Line No.	For	Read
5	7	10	<i>Add</i> 'keeping in view the position that the Department of Telecommunications is a revenue earning department, the Committee desire the Government to reconsider higher allocation of resources'.	
	5	7	12& 16	sources resources
	9	13	4	<i>Delete</i> 'main'
	13	17	5	training the personnel the personnel
	13	18	5	officers officials
	13	18	11	same first
	16	24	10	may should
	18	27	10-11	<i>Delete</i> 'of the Department'
	19	30	9	may should
	29	43	4	need need to
	29	43	9	<i>Delete</i> 'apart from installing latest equipments'
	39	55	16	<i>Add</i> 'or using battery' after the word 'solar'
	39A	57	—	<i>Add</i> the following in the last: 'The Department of Telecommunications should monitor telephones of those subscribers whose telephones are likely to be misused and also explore feasibility of installing meters at users' residences.'
	42	60	4	beneficiaries unauthorised beneficiaries
	48	31	7	but the overall the

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10. Subscribers Subscription Service India, 21, Raghunath Dadaji Street, 2nd Floor, Bombay-400 001.	18. M/s. Rajendra Book Agency, IV-DR59, Lajpat Nagar, Old Double Storey, New Delhi-110 024. (T.No. 6412362 & 6412131).	
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