

1	2	3	4
11. Foreign Trade and Export Production	110,45,05,000	86,77,50,000	552,25,25,000 433,87,50,000
12. Textiles, Handloom and Handicrafts	58,52,02,000	31,84,22,000	292,60,12,000 159,21,11,000

17.04 hrs.

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENERAL), 1984-85-Contd.**

**Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**

**MR. CHAIRMAN :** The House will now take up discussion and voting on Demand Nos. 64 to 66 relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for which 4 hours have been allotted.

Hon. Members present in the House whose cut motions to the Demands for Grants have been circulated may, if they desire to move their cut motions, send slips to the Table within 15 minutes indicating the serial numbers of the cut motions they would like to move. Those cut motions only will be treated as moved.

A list showing the serial numbers of cut

motions treated as moved will be put up on the Notice Board shortly. In case any Member finds and discrepancy in the list he may kindly bring it to the notice of the Officer at the Table without delay.

**Motion moved :**

“That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the fourth column of the Order Paper be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of India to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st day of March, 1985, in respect of the heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demands Nos. 64 to 66 relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.”

*Demands for Grants, 1984-85 in respect of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting submitted to the vote of Lok Sabha*

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grant on account voted by the House on 14th March, 1984		Amount of Demand for Grant submitted to the vote of the House	
		Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.	Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.
<b>Ministry of Information and Broadcasting</b>					
64.	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	23,52,000	...	1,17,60,000	...
65.	Information and Publicity	5,89,54,000	21,83,000	29,47,68,000	1,09,17,000
66.	Broadcasting	23,20,07,000	19,88,70,000	116,00,36,000	99,43,51,000

**PROF. RUP CHAND PAL (Hooghly) :** A country is known by its mass media. Although our country claims to be the largest democracy, our two electronic media continued and still continue to be as bonded serfs. They are just like bonded labour. Even after 55 years, this Akash Vani, All India Radio and after 25 years of its existence, the Doordarshan...

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN- TARY AFFAIRS, SPORTS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BUTA SINGH) :** They are as free as Radio Moscow.

**PROF. RUP CHAND PAL :** .. they are as bonded as ever. They are bonded labourers and there have been persistent demands all these years for autonomy for these two institutions. There should be some democratic norms for a civilised country.

Although important committees and working groups have been set up and one at the time, when Mrs. Gandhi was the Minister for Information and Broadcasting—the Chanda Committee, but never the recommendations were considered and the public demand, a very justified demand for autonomy to these electronic media granted. In this sphere the performance of the Janata Government is not also very laudable. Although they had an election pledge to redeem the media from its bondage and to relieve it from its subjugation at the hands of the Central Government and the ruling Party, they could not keep up their pledge. In spite of the Verghese Committee that was set up and its recommendations, they could not keep up their promise and they had also failed.

The Congress (I) Party which is now ruling at the centre is determined to continue these two electronic media as their subser- vients and to them there is very little difference between the Party and the Govern- ment and the line has been erased to a large extent. Where the Government ends and where the Party begins they have forgotten and they have mixed them up together... (Interruptions) And the be-all and end-all of these electronic media is now to project the only leader and the only successor, the present leader and the future hope. That is the purpose for which these two electronic

media are being used.

We have several times discussed on the very floor of this House how the Akash Vani and the Doordarshan are being totally misused—totally, for narrow partisan ends. Otherwise, how can we explain that a Chief Minister of a State was to address the people and a petty officer in one of the electronic media had the audacity to disallow him—one elected Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh ? This was discussed here. Several times we have raised this question. Even the other day we discussed it.

On 15th January a very ugly incident had taken place in Calcutta when the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah was coming to Dum Dum Airport. He was physically assaulted by Congress (I) hoodlums at the instance of the known Congress (I) leaders. ... (Interruptions)

**SHRI P. NAMGYAL (Ladakh) :** Jammu and Kashmir Government Information Officer in Delhi has totally denied that he was assaulted by anybody. ...

(Interruptions)

**PROF. RUP CHAND PAL :** I am not yielding.

(Interruptions)

And according to the law of the land the offenders had been arrested and in protest they organised a so-called 'bundh' and indulged in violence. In the evening of 17th January the Chief Minister of West Bengal gave a statement regarding the happenings of the day and the Delhi station of AIR blacked it out. They only covered the statements of the offenders. Then we raised this question the Information and Broad- casting Minister tried to avoid it by saying that the Chief Minister's statement had been covered in the regional news. We did not ask about the regional news. That is a different matter. It has been seen on several occasions that the statements of important political leaders of national stature were completely blacked out and pigmy leaders of the Congress (I) of the village level were covered at length. (Interruptions)

During the last panchayat elections in

[Prof. Rup Chand Pal]

West Bengal the statement of the Panchayat Minister was not covered in the news. There was nothing news-worthy in the Panchayat Minister's statement, according to the judgement of the official media. But if the Congress (I) leader sneezed it was news. If the Congress (I) leader yawned it was news. You claim to be the largest democracy. This is the horrible situation prevailing in the two electronic media—monopoly control in telecasting and monopoly control in production of programmes. This is the way you are moving. So, it sounds very ironical when our Prime Minister at the international forum says that the developed countries—America and others—are united in one thing, that is, not to allow developing countries their due share in the air frequencies. So, she says that we should have a new international information order. Many meetings have been held where demands have been made that the developing countries should have their due share in air frequency. It should not be at the mercy of the developed countries but it seems ironical that at the domestic scene it is authoritarian monopoly control and the two mass media being used for narrow partisan ends. In a democracy the Opposition is believed to have its own views. It is permitted and it is expected that important views, comments, constructive criticism and suggestions should be covered by the mass media. It is hardly done. There are norms, codes and guidelines. In the revised guidelines of 1980 it has been said that the two electronic media will present objective and balanced news.

We find that Guideline No. 6 states as follows :

“Dissemination of information, news and comments in Akashvani and Doordarshan and Films Division should be done in a fair, objective and balanced manner, including contrasting points of view, with emphasis on events and developments.”

Now, Sir, it is nowhere to be seen in practice. It is only the views of the Government which is propagated. There is a very thin line between the views of the Government and the views of the party in power.

Then the Guideline says :

“Reference to personalities may be made primarily for providing human interest.”

Is it so ? It is not so. Unimportant utterances, utterances of no national interest are being covered at length but the opposition views are never touched. Even a single word from opposition is not touched by your news on many occasions. This is the situation. The fact is that even after 55 years of the existence of All India Radio and 25 years of existence of Door Darshan, the Government has not yet evolved any coherent national policy of broadcasting.

We may or may not agree with some of the policies like industrial policy and so on. Of late you have announced a technology policy ; they have a Space Policy ; these are announced policies ; but till today there is no national policy of Broadcasting. Why do you not have such a policy ? It is said that we are on the threshold of a communication revolution with the latest technology being brought to our door-step. I am not going into that. By that way you are opening the gates for multinationals and monopolies to control the hardware. But I am not going into that now because this is not the occasion to discuss that thing. On broadcasting you have no policy. What is the role of Akashvani ? What is the role of Door Darshan ? How can they interact ? What should be the thrust ? How much is to go for the rural area where 80% of the population lives ? How much for urban sector ? How much for working class ? How much for peasantry ? How much for entertainment and how much for education ? How best can you use your INSAT I-B and other things ? This study has never been done. Is there any institutionalised mechanism to review and assess the programmes which you are giving out ? No. There is no institutionalised mechanism to assess what they are doing. The bureaucrats meet and discuss certain things. There are meetings of the State Information Ministers and so on. They pass some pious resolutions, that is all. Some suggestions are made. But, Sir, if you look at the content of broadcasting, what is the content, you do find ? If you analyse what do you find really ? You say, broadcasting is for information ; you say it is for education,

and also for entertainment. Well, if you analyse the total broadcasting time you find that 38% of broadcasting time is given for music, it includes classical music, folk music etc.—all types of music. What time do you give for 80% of the population, who are the farmers, who have to be educated on many points in respect of agriculture, who have to be educated or how to get over their superstitions and social obstacles? In this regard what is the situation which is prevailing? The bulk of the farmers and weaker sections does not get more than 6 per cent of the broadcasting time. 38% is given for the music programme. For the tribal people's music and also folk music and rural people's music, music for 70 per cent of the population, only 3.84 per cent of the time is given. For folk music, tribal culture, etc. only a very, very limited time is allotted.

Now, do you educate the people regarding the problems of our country? What are the problems in your country? You need not accept my philosophy or my views. But according to your 20-Point Programme, one of the major problems in our country is land reforms. What are the constraints and what stands in the way of land reforms? Have you ever educated the people in our country about the land reform? When you are having 20-Point Programme, through the mass media, have you tried to educate your people? What stands in your way of educating the people about the land reform? Have you made any effort in this regard? Never.

It has been stated explicitly in our Constitution that the aim is to establish an egalitarian society, to reduce the discrepancy between the rich and the poor. But when people find that the total assets of the monopoly houses mount in geometric progression, on the other hand a large segment of our population—60% to 70% of our population—are still living below the poverty line in spite of your manipulation of statistical figures. Do you ever see why this discrepancy? It has been said in the Preamble that we have to adopt Socialism. Now, what socialism means? Do you ever educate the people about socialism? You speak so much of 20-Point Programme. Have you ever propagated socialism? Never. You

don't like to do that because according to your class-interest, you cannot do that. The two media are used for the same purpose which you control. You want to continue the class-rule, the monopoly houses, multi-nationals and the imperialist agencies who are in collaboration with them.

Now, you have got educational programme, whatever education you mean. But how many receiving sets do you have in schools? You have got about 15,000 programmes, different educational programmes. There are 5 lakh schools and you have a total of 73,000 receivers only. You say it is not your responsibility. You have stated that it is the responsibility of the States to provide the receiving sets. Now, you have decided to expand the new electronic media, that is, Television. You have decided to expand it with an involvement of Rs. 68 crores or Rs. 70 crores for setting up 139 new relay centres. Do you know how many receiving sets—that is, Television sets—this country has got? It is only 2 millions and they are mostly concentrated in the metropolitan cities of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

Now, there are only 7000 community viewing sets in the country. You claim that there is going to be expansion. But this is in fact no expansion. This is also measure to continue monopoly control. Because real expansion means setting up of studios and programme production facilities so that in a country like ours, with a diversity of culture, with different linguistic groups, they can produce their own cultural programmes. Such expansion will cost about Rs. 700 crores. But with this Rs. 70 crore, what are you going to do? From one centre, you are going to have some sponsored programmes with captive audience viewing very wide projections of the only leader and the only successor. You have introduced National Programme. Now our country is facing so many problems with regard to unity. It seems our own unity is in danger.

There are a number of destabilising factors and certain international agencies are also working in that direction. There are many other things. At such a time, we need to stress the importance of national harmony and national integration and the mass

[Prof. Rup Chand Pal]

media should be used to educate the people of different ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups. But by introducing one national programme in Doordarshan without a proper imagination and perspective, you are doing just the opposite. You are taking away the time from the regional programmes and imposing your own programmes on a captive audience. What is the quality of programmes in Doordarshan? It is sub-standard. Instead of having a coherent national policy about the software, about the programmes, you are just making the television another outlet for the film industry. I have learnt that from the 14th of this month, the number of Hindi films has been increased and the time of the regional films has been shifted to a very inconvenient time. This is the position.

Now, let us have a look at the cinema. It is the same story. This Government is out to destroy the unity of the country. I make that charge. Even after 37 years of our independence, if you look at the production of films the picture is not at all encouraging. 741 films have been produced in the year 1983. Out of these films, 134 have been produced in Telugu, 132 in Hindi, 128 in Tamil, 112 in Malayalam and then the number goes on reducing. And Mr. Chairman, Sir, your State has a very rich culture, and the number of films produced in Oriya is just 12. Why? Why this uneven development? Again what is the standard of most of these films? Cinema is a State subject. But the censorship is in the control of the Central Government. Is there any uniform pattern or standard of censorship? I have repeatedly raised this question. Films from the South are being passed, which are not only obscene, not only full of sex, but full of vulgarity. The producers have come to the conclusion that sex sells better, violence sells better, and somehow they will produce only such films. Even sometimes by changing the title of the film, they show films full of sex and vulgarity. I can cite a number of examples.

Now, let us have a look at the freedom of the press. We have been giving some advices to other countries and making speeches in the international forums. I am not

going into the details of the Bihar Press Bill etc. which has already been withdrawn. The Second Press Commission has come out with certain very important recommendations. Has the Government accepted any of them? Is the Government considering measures as to how to take out the newspaper industry from the hands of the big business houses? Has any attempt been made to protect the interests of the small newspapers? Have you any advertisement policy other than using it as a weapon to keep the press in control? If you have a close look at the press and other media spheres, you will find that the Government wants to have an absolute control over it. This cannot continue to be so. The State Governments in a federal setup must have a say, and very rightly a demand from the opposition has come up that a coordination Committee with the representatives of the Central Government and State Governments should be set up for the two electronic media. This is very correct. I do not know when P.C. Joshi Committee on software policy is going to be implemented. It has also recommended autonomy for the mass media so that the news coverage can be independent, so that their credibility is not totally destroyed. Credibility is a very important question, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have taken a lot of time.

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL : Sir, credibility is more important than time.

I conclude by saying that it is high time the Government seriously pondered over this, viz. if they do not allow these two electronic media to develop in the right, democratic manner as they should, the day will not be far off, when instead of unifying the country these electronic media, because of their wrong policy, will cause a great damage to our country.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI (Patna) :  
I beg to move :

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1."

[Failure to give more powers to Cen-

tral Board of Film Censors and ensure production of films according to the requirements of the country.] (67)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to implement the provisions of Official Language Act, 1983, in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.] (68)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to follow right policy in giving Government advertisements to the newspapers controlled by the monopolists.] (69)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to give more Government advertisements and other help to small newspapers.] (70)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to end monopoly in newspapers.] (71)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to check increasing stronghold of monopolists on the newspapers.] (72)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to eliminate yellow journalism.] (73)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to take action against the newspapers fomenting fissiparous tendencies, communalism, casteism and lingualism.] (74)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to instal more powerful transmitters for A.I.R. and Doordarshan to counter the propaganda of hostile countries.] (75)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to take assistance from socialist countries for the development of Akashvani and Doordarshan.] (76)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure for an impartial policy by Akashvani and Doordarshan.] (77)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure of Akashvani and Doordarshan to counter effectively the malicious propoganda made against the country.] (78)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to start a forceful campaign against divisive forces and secessionist elements through Akashvani and Doordarshan.] (79)

“That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1.”

[Failure to initiate, special efforts to infuse and spread through Akashvani and Doordarshan a sense of country's

[Shri Rawavatar Shastri]

unity, integrity, democracy, socialism and secularism among the people.] (80)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1."

[Failure to do away with the partisan policy being followed by Akashvani and Doordarshan in allowing more time to ruling party leaders as compared to the opposition party leaders.] (81)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced to RE. 1."

[Failure to give special assistance to the language papers.] (82)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to make the Directorate of Field Publicity more effective.] (83)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to give priority to small newspapers, Hindi and regional language newspapers in the matter of allotment of newsprint.] (84)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to take steps to check malpractices in Hindustan Samachar news agency.] (85)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to take steps for the payment of salaries to the employees of Hindustan Samachar.] (86)

"That the Demand under the Head

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to take steps for the withdrawal of lock-out in Hindi news agency Samachar Bharati.] (87)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to ensure payment of arrears of pay and bonus and other dues to the employees of Samachar Bharati.] (88)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to provide more powerful equipment for Akashwani, Patna.] (89)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to check unnecessary delay in the setting up of a Doordarshan relay Station at Patna.] (90)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to ensure impartiality by newspapers towards certain parties and Members of Parliament.] (91)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to ensure impartiality by newspapers in reporting the Proceedings of Parliament.] (92)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to do away with the biased policy in broadcasting *Sansad Sameeksha* and *Today in Parliament*.] (93)

"That the Demand under the Head

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to check giving of special importance to certain political parties and MPS by ignoring the contribution made by others in broadcasting the programmes, 'Sansad Sameeksha' and Today in Parliament.] (94)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to make films on the lives and struggles of revolutionaries of the country for inculcating among the youth a sense of patriotism, good conduct, nation-building and fight against communalism.] (95)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to make films on the lives and work of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Master Dave, Rajguru, Sukhdev and other revolutionaries.] (96)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to ban production of obscene, horror, anti-women and other films that incite violence, robberies and dacoities.] (97)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to take a film depicting the glorious history of the freedom struggle.] (98)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to ban talks by the communal elements over the AIR and Television.] (99)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to produce films that help to solve problems of the people.] (100)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to check wrong and misleading propaganda against the opposition parties by the AIR and Television.] (101)

"That the Demand under the Head Ministry of Information and Broadcasting be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to increase the time and frequency of talks by opposition parties over the AIR and Television.] (102)

**PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR** (Hamirpur) : Sir, I rise to support the Demands presented to this House by the hon. Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting.

I was simply amused by what my friend from the opposite said. He saw nothing except captive control in everything that emanates from AIR and TV. Because this word 'captive control' is his technique, and the technique of his party, he could find nothing better.

On the other hand, I must congratulate the Ministry—both the Ministries at that—for a very qualitative improvement and also for quantitative expansion of the network. I would only refer to the figures for the 6th five-year plan. At the beginning of the 6th plan, AIR covered 90% of the population of this country, and 78% of the area was within its range. Now at the end, it is expected that the population covered would be 95% of the total, and the area covered 86%. This is for AIR. For TV, at the beginning of the plan, only 6% of the area was covered, and only 16% of the population. At the end of the plan, we expect 17% of the area to be covered, and 33% of the population.



[Prof. Narain Chand Parashar]

We have one very ambitious plan, called the Special T.V. Expansion Plan, which is expected to cover 78% of the population at a cost of Rs. 68 crores. This big push has gone unnoticed by my friend opposite. But it is convenient for them to forget what is good for the country, and good for the masses. It is convenient for them to remember only what is good for their party.

We on this side have a different complaint. The ruling party does not get the time that it is entitled to, on the basis of the votes got by it in the elections, or on the strength of the seats obtained by the party in this House. It is the Opposition which steals the show. I would request the Minister to redress this imbalance in our favour, because it is our members, it is our people who have to suffer on this score.

I am afraid that most of the things that have been quoted by my friend opposite are out of place. He has referred to lack of any communication or broadcasting policy. Only last year, we celebrated the International Communication Year; and the two Ministries, viz. the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Communications jointly organized some conferences. I am told that a National Communication Policy is in the offing, and in the process of evolution. But it does not mean that unless that national policy on communication is evolved and is approved by this House, there is no policy at all. There is a concrete programme. There is a solid content which our friends on the opposite side miss. They count the trees, but miss the woods. That is their fundamental mistake.

In a vast country with a cultural diversity of a very high order, we can only refer to one thing; and we can see what is there. I want to quote two news items which are broadcast from the radio. He is not here to listen; but he should know this. I would read from page 18 of this News Services and we would have an idea of what the AIR is doing. No other University, no UGC, no other network of the schools and colleges are doing what the AIR is doing and the TV are doing for the presentation of a rich cultural programme to the people and the

news in the various languages. The News Wing of AIR broadcast everyday 254 bulletins for a duration of over 35 hours in its home external and regional services. In the home services, from Delhi these national bulletins are put out in 19 languages. The Constitution recognises only 15 languages and the radio uses 19 languages for a duration of 10 hours and 8 minutes daily. In the regional services, 123 regional bulletins including 3 from Delhi are broadcast daily in about 16 languages and dialects. You can imagine which is the university in the country which is teaching all these 16 languages, which is the programme in the field of education or in other spheres or in other Ministries of the Government of India which is given patronage to the 68 regional languages most of which are not recognised by the Sahitya Akademy; they are not recognised by the Constitution, but they are patronised by the AIR and TV because they are living languages; they are spoken in the length and breadth of the country; they are understood and spoken. This is the valid point.

Let us look at the foreign languages. In the external service, 63 bulletins in 24 languages are put out every day from Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras for a duration of 48 hours and 42 minutes. Is there any university in the country which is teaching all the 24 languages spoken in foreign countries which are being employed, utilised and used by the external services? Is there any educational institution in the country which is carrying even research in 16 languages of this country and dialects? There is none. Therefore, we must be thankful to the AIR, to the Ministry and to the TV for patronising these spoken languages which are even otherwise dwindling and which may not be used by schools at many places.

The other aspect is that in this country where the roads are not easily available in the far flung areas, where people may not be there but scattered hamlets may be there, it is the spoken words of the radio which give information, which give education and which give entertainment to the masses. These three basic concepts of information, education and entertainment are catered to by no other agency on such a large scale as

by this Ministry. I must congratulate the Minister for this that in the ranges, in the far away hills of Lahaul and Spiti and Arunachal Pradesh where it is not possible to reach for six months of the year, it is the radio which caters to the needs of those people and bind them to the nation.

Prof. Paul has charged the Congress Party and the Central Government for destroying the unity of the country. If there is any party in the country, if there is any government holding the unity of the country together, it is the Indian National Congress, it is the Central Government which is represented by this party. AIR and the other media are trying to see that the unity remains and develops in spite of the opposition, in spite of their burns and in spite of their agitation that they launch from time to time in the name of religion, caste, language, sub-group, culture, region, everything, whatever tool they can take and hold of, they would try to fling it at the nation's unity.

We, on the other hand, have a clear vision and a solid programme and a concrete ideology which we want to bring forward to the people. I would request the hon. Minister to bring home to the people the sacrifices made by the freedom fighters of this country during the course of freedom struggle.

My esteemed colleague, Shri V.N. Gadgil has launched a series of commemorative stamps to highlight freedom struggle in the country. The first stamp in this series was released by the Prime Minister on the 9th of August in Delhi to highlight 'Quit India' Resolution passed by the Indian National Congress which showed mass upsurge among the Indian People for throwing away the yoke in a manner. I would request him that broadcast from the AIR, scenes on the TV and various films should be prepared and produced in the near future so that the tremendous upsurge that the nation witnessed during the past few decades before India got independence and the tremendous amount of sacrifices that the people had to undergo for the sake of the liberation of the Mother Land should be brought to the mind of the young people and they should be registered properly.

And they should be registered properly. Similarly, I would request that in the Publications Division also the series, 'Builders of Modern India' covering the biographies should be extended to cover various regional heroes in the States so that people of the country are brought on a common platform to share this feeling that this country was united in the freedom struggle and it is united now and it will continue to remain united in the future also.

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur): But they are going slow about it.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : I agree that they must be quick about it. Already a large number of our people, the younger generation, have already forgotten what they really sacrificed for the country, They should be told that there were freedom fighters like Gandhiji, Jawaharlal and Subhash, and that the entire nation came forward to listen to their call, filled the jails and marshalled the freedom movement, and therefore we were freed from the foreign yoke at a speed which even amazed the foreigners. This must be highlighted and properly publicised.

The Directorate of Field Publicity the Song and Drama Division, and the Films Division can play a prominent role in this sphere and they must play it.

We have seen how energetic and imaginative is the programme that has been launched for covering the entire country. Today the child in the village looks forward to the day when he will be able to have some programme of INSAT in his own home school, primary school.

Education has also to be taken care of by this Ministry. The Education Ministry wants the programmes to be strengthened, not only for universities and colleges but also in the village schools. He has referred to the fact that five lakh schools are to be given receivers for the people, but it requires Rs. 28 crores, and this amount has been transferred from the Commercial Services and piped into this programme for the extension of TV. I want to tell him that it is very good to have these 13 high power

[Prof. Narain Chand Parashar]

transmitters and 113 low power transmitters throughout the country. Our State, Himachal Pradesh is a big State, it is larger than Punjab and Haryana in area, it is vast in expanse, and very uneven and high and low in depth ; it is entitled to more than what he has given. He has given only two new transmitters, one in Kasauli and another at Kulu. I would plead with him that unless more transmission time is given to the State and unless district radio stations are set up it will not be sufficient to meet their requirements. The area is hilly and backward and it will not, as I said, do justice to their cause. Therefore, I plead that a radio station at every district should be given—may be of a lower power—but that must cater to the regional contents and that alone will lead to enrichment of the culture. There is demand every village—not only Delhi and its neighbouring areas—for this. Opportunity has to be provided for that also. Just as you have said that you are going to provide for the promotion of 60 languages, it is good and his Ministry is doing justice to the vast cultural variety of India and it should be his endeavour to cater to more languages. There are at least 40 tribal languages which are spoken and there are many regional languages also. My own State deserves to be taken up for better attention and patronage by the Minister, because, at present, Jullundur station covers only Dogri language. Himachal Pradesh is a neighbouring State, but the TV station at Jullundur does not do anything for it. Therefore, for TV I want that we should be given adequate share.

I am happy that on the structural side the 14-member Advisory Committee which was set up under the Chairmanship of Shri G. Parthasarathy, constituted on 28th November, 1980, has made recommendations, and most of these recommendations have been accepted. On the others they are having some serious thinking. The recommendation regarding staff artists for the grant of pension is a very welcome step, because they are all talented people, they have given of their best and they deserve a better deal. Similarly the other aspects of the proposals about the introduction of Colour TV have

also to be taken into account. The recommendation about the Publications Division are also under the consideration of Government. The Ministry is also doing good work in the implementation of Hindi and the charge that the regional languages are being neglected is not true. Because, we want to patronise the regional languages ; in fact, I am more eager to see that more languages are given patronage than they are given at the moment. Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit, and all the languages have a good heritage and they should be promoted.

I would be a very happy man when I see the entire country has district administration and district headquarters and each State has adequate number of TV stations so that the entire length and breadth of the country is covered, because we are coming to an age where information would be important. The communication of information without partiality, without any bias, without any control would be of a great value. And towards this end, an international information order is being oriented. I am not happy to see that my friend opposite has levelled serious charges. I must state that India is taking a lead in the evolution of an international information order and it would be a proud day for the developing nations of the world when this lead is given and the developing nations steal a march over the western countries in the process of patronising the media and placing of news which is shared by the whole of mankind without referring to caste, creed and colour.

With these words, I congratulate the hon. Minister and his deputy and the people who are working in the Ministry at various far away stations, for the good work that they are doing.

SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA (Vai-shali) : I rise to express my views and offer a few remarks on the working of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. At a time when information has acquired great importance, we have a progressive scaling down or downgrading of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Earlier, the Ministry was under a Cabinet Minister. I must give credit to Mr. Sathe who brought to bear a modern outlook and enabled the

Ministry to come out from its shell of old fashioned broadcasting to the modern TV age. We do not know why he was shifted and that too on the eve of his signal achievement in introducing colour broadcasting.

The contents of the broadcasting material being put out, create an impression that information is replaced by propaganda and education by indoctrination. Unfortunately this transformation is taking place when Shri Bhagat for whom I have great regard, is heading the Ministry. I am sorry to have to say that some time this is overdone, so much that a commentator the other day characterised the All India Radio news bulletins as East Delhi Gazette—much like the Railway Ministry is now-a-days called the Malda Express. I hope, that Mr. Bhagat would direct his attention to this aspect in order to correct distortions.

When I said that a change has taken place by shifting from information to propaganda, it is not without evidence. But I know that this would not be liked by the other side. Therefore, I would suggest that this may be referred to an independent body of experts to give their opinion.

The projection of Asiad through the lower power transmitters was a striking demonstration of the capability of this medium. From there to the concept of covering the entire country with these low power transmitter networks was certainly a big jump—one for which the Government must receive credit, though, as in the case of Mr. Sathe, the one technocrat who gave this idea was shunted out. There is something in this Government which, like the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh, slaughters the very person who gives an impressive idea.

Having discovered the potential of T.V., what is the very first thing that is done? A programme is chalked out in all haste to draw up a schedule of screening films on independence struggle, all in a hush-hush manner, the obvious and unstated idea being that this should be used to identify the present ruling party with the great Congress which fought for independence, to project the contributions of a few persons to the virtual exclusion of others. While money and energy for this is easily found, the main

purpose for which the INSAT TV programme was designed, namely, to reach out to villages in 18 districts in six States, is lagging behind and localised programmes are available only in Andhra and Orissa. The local programmes that should have been broadcast from the backward districts of U.P. and Bihar, for instance, are simply not there, the transmitters in Muzaffarpur and Deoria depend on Delhi Doordarshan with its urban programme. I would urge most strongly that the transmitter of Muzaffarpur should be replaced by a high power transmitter and should be made a full-fledged T.V. Station. I am told that Government are thinking of setting up a T.V. Station at Bettia. The reason behind this proposal is not clear. I would strongly suggest that Government should strengthen the T.V. Station of Muzaffarpur. Besides, I would once again emphasise the need for finding even ten minutes everyday for some broadcasts from Muzaffarpur in Bajjika which is spoken by 50 lakh people in Bihar.

Reverting to the film on independence struggle, I wish to make it clear that nobody says that the independence struggle should not be filmed and shown. The whole thing is vitiated by the propaganda angle and the hasty production on such a great theme could only degrade the quality and instead of presenting an authentic version, contrary results could come. I would like to sound a word of caution to this Government that you are handling a medium like T.V., the full meaning of which it appears is not realised. T.V. is a cruel medium. We remember that during the Nixon-Kennedy debate, it was T.V. which decided the fate of the election and Kennedy scored. The systematic attempt to project only few people may be self-defeating. Despite Government propaganda, the Assamese, by and large, did not participate in the elections. What happened was that they began to switch on to the BBC for news as AIR turned more and more to fancy than facts. It is most unfortunate that our people should believe a foreign radio and disbelieve our own. But it is the result of substituting propaganda for facts, for imagining that people could be misled in forming their opinion. Here, I recall the position of Goebbel's propaganda machine. The German people did not believe the announce-

[Shrimati Kishori Sinha]

ment that Britain had declared war on Germany. They thought that this was another trick of befooling the people. So, all your facts about the 20 Point Programme are also likely to be taken to be fiction by the people because AIR is gradually losing credibility. I am sorry to say that.

I know the Minister has worked among the public for more than three long decades. He is a real grass root man with considerable experience about people's psychology. I do hope he will agree that there are greater dangers in this all consuming passion for propaganda.

The Government is confident today that it can control the media because it has the AIR and T.V. and the Films Division under its control. Any programme to be beamed to the nation has to go through the satellite and the Government exercises control over the satellite. This Government controls all access to the media, in addition to the media itself. May I, however, remind you that this situation is changing.

The TV today is a passive medium. The consumer has no choice but to see what you want him to see. But this situation will change in just five years. The first change is the incursion of foreign broadcasting media; the United States is building a string of powerful transmitters in Sri Lanka to cover the entire Indian sub-continent. It can also hire Intelsat V and Intelsat VI series of satellites in the next four years, which will enable it to beam TV programmes into India, which Indian TV viewers can contact with a direct reception antenna. True, this antenna today is too costly for individual viewers to buy. But it will not be so in the next five years. With this technological change, the monopoly of the TV media will end before the current decade ends.

Another change is the fast rate at which video is catching up. The Government, of course, is cracking down, and rightly so, on video piracy. But that is only one aspect. Already, most towns have video libraries. With greater demand for video tapes, it will not be long before private programmes come into the field and have video tapes for educational, informational and other purposes, apart from entertainment.

What about the video player? Today a VCR costs around Rs. 10,000 which used to cost around Rs. 40,000 about four years back. Even if you do not allow the local price to come down, the rate at which the VCR prices are coming down, all over the world, it will be available for as low as Rs. 5,000 in the next two years. I hope the Minister realises that he will soon have to cope up with the fact that most middle class

families in towns will have VCRs, that they will pick up tapes from circulating libraries and play their own programme, and only selectively listen to the Doordarshan. And once this happens, it will not be long before the video revolution goes to the larger villages. In fact, with wide screen projection now having been made possible, larger village panchayats could afford to put up their entertainment-cum-information-cum-education programme and then they would not care for your programmes. You cannot prevent this for long. The Government has wisely decided to expand TV to cover 70 per cent of the population. But to satisfy a diverse population, the uni-dimensional approach would not do. The stifling atmosphere prevailing due to bureaucratic control militates against the spirit of creativeness. And it is creativeness which the TV revolution demands.

The problem with this Government is that it has no media policy or rather communication policy. I said this two years ago. But, since then, I see only *ad hoc* responses. The new communication revolution should have been assessed and a plan to utilise its potential should have been ready by now.

One word for the AIR and TV employees. Working under great strain, these employees have done the best they could under the circumstances. They are discriminated against despite all this. They still do not have all the facilities that Government employees get, even though they have all the responsibilities of Government servants. The casual artistes lead a miserable life. In fact, AIR and TV should create special benefit funds for artistes who might be disabled or might be otherwise in difficult straits. So, I would suggest for the consideration of the Minister the need for implementing the recommendations of the Sarkar Commission.

Finally, let me appeal to the hon. Minister to re-orient the policy. The media is offering this country great opportunity to jump the literacy barriers, to be well and critically informed and to discuss and understand public affairs without prejudice. Let this opportunity be used in furtherance of democracy.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Mr. Bishnu Prasad may speak.

SHRI BISHNU PRASAD (Kaliabor) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants in respect of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Prasad, you may continue tomorrow.

18.01 hours.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, April 17, 1984/Chaitra 28, 1906 (Saka).*