

16.15 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULES, 377

(i) TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU.

*SHRI D. S. A. SIVAPRAKASAM (Tirunelveli): Under Rule 377 I rise the following matter of urgent public importance.

After the declaration of Tuticorin Port as a major port, there is unprecedented space of industrial development in Tirunelveli District. Very shortly, in Tirunelveli district an airport will be set up, in Tuticorin a shipyard is also being proposed. Yet, regrettably, the telecommunication facilities are woefully lacking in Tirunelveli District. Tirunelveli Exchange has not been linked with national trunk-net works. In Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai the manually operated exchange is functioning. There are 2500 subscribers. S. T. D. facilities are not there. For this exchange a big building has been completed by the Telephone Department. In the absence of telephone equipment, this building remains empty for the past ten years. The required machinery should be installed in this building. Tuticorin is the industrial hub of Tirunelveli District. More S. T. D. facilities should be given for Tuticorin. In Sankarnagar there is a big cement factory. There are many modern rice mills, spinning mills, chemical factories around.

16.17 hrs.

[SHRI HARINATHA MISRA in the Chair]

When Tirunelveli Exchange becomes an automatic exchange, the small telephone exchange in Sankarnagar should be connected with Tirunelveli automatic exchange. I am living in Mukkodai where there is a small exchange. This is about 15 km. away from Tirunelveli. If Mukkodai is linked with the Tirunelveli automatic exchange, I will be in a better position to take up the people's causes with the officials in Tirunelveli and others of the State and Central Governments. Presently between 8 A.M. and 3 P. M. we have to wait for materialisation of trunk calls even to get urgently Doctors from Tirunelveli. In the interest of the people of my parliamentary constituency, I demand immediate action in this matter.

(ii) POST AND TELEGRAPH SERVICE IN RAJASTHAN.

श्री नवलकिशोर शर्मा (दौसा): पिछले कुछ दिनों से डाक तार विभाग में व्याप्त अव्यवस्था चरम सीमा तक पहुंच गई है। तारें एवं चिट्ठियां लोगों को

समय पर मिल जाएंगी, इसकी कोई गारन्टी नहीं रही है। टेलीफोन और टेलीप्रिंटर सेवाएं भी अस्त-व्यस्त हो रही हैं और ग्राम उपभोक्ताओं को भारी परेशानियों का सामना करना पड़ रहा है।

ट्रंक काल के लिए घंटों इंतजार करने के बाद मिलना ग्राम बात है। समाचार पत्रों की टेलीप्रिंटर लाइनें ग्राम तौर पर बंद पड़ी रहती हैं। टेलीफोन सेवाओं की हालत भी खस्ता है—टेलीफोन ग्राम-तौर पर "डेड" रहते हैं अथवा गलत लाइन पर मिलते हैं। टेलीफोन एक्सचेंज के अधिकांश टेलीफोनों से संतोषजनक उत्तर न मिलने के कारण टेलीफोन सुविधा की जगह सर दर्द बनकर रह गया है। तार देने वाले व पाने वालों की स्थिति भी काफी खराब है। ग्रामतौर पर तार काफी विलम्ब से मिलते हैं। यहां तक कि श्रीराम हाकी प्रतियोगिता में गए कई खेल संवाददाताओं के तार भी समय पर नहीं पहुंच सके कुछ तारें तो 24 घंटे बाद पहुंचे और कुछ तारें तो पहुंची ही नहीं।

इस सारी स्थिति का कारण अधिकारियों की लापरवाही—कर्मचारियों में कार्य-कुशलता की कमी के अलावा—अधिकारियों द्वारा ओवर टाइम कम करने की आड़ में ओवर टाइम बंद करना व लम्बे असें तक कार्य के अनुपात में कर्मचारियों की भर्ती न करना आदि मुख्य कारण हैं। इनका अविलंब निराकरण किया जाना चाहिए ताकि डाक तार—टेलीफोन सेवाएं सुचारू रूप से कार्य करें और ग्राम आदमी को हो रही परेशानी न उठानी पड़े।

मैं संचार मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान डाक तार टेलीफोन सेवाओं में खासतौर पर राजस्थान की सेवाओं में निरंतर

[श्री तवल किशोर शर्मा]

गिरावट की ओर दिलाना चाहता हूँ और उनको इस संबंध में एक वक्तव्य देने की मांग करना हूँ।

(iii) FUNCTIONING OF AIR AND DOOR-DARSHAN

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV (AZAMGARH) : All India Radio and Doordarshan are very important national media of mass communication. They should function in a manner that people are informed and educated on important national policies, programmes and issues. Besides, they should also help in informing the people of important national and international developments. Though they are functioning under government control, they should be objective and impartial in conveying the information and messages to the people whether they relate to the government, Opposition or any other section of the society.

I have been watching very closely for sometime the functioning of AIR and Doordarshan and have seen that the Opposition view points though of public importance both inside and outside Parliament are being systematically blacked out and also distorted in the News Bulletins as well as 'Today in Parliament'. The views expressed by Opposition members even of the most national and international issues through Questions, Calling Attention Notices, Privilege Motions, Adjournment Motions and Parliamentary debates are either completely blacked out or, if given at all, only a very passing reference is made. The Ministry is virtually using the media to propagate the ruling party's view points. I would not contest the right of the government to project its policies and achievements through the media but in a Parliamentary democracy it will be a very unhealthy trend to black out or distort the Opposition points of view.

I have also found a disturbing trend in AIR and Doordarshan the way they have been reporting the unfortunate incidents in Moradabad and other parts of the country which do not help to create an atmosphere of amity and communal harmony.

Both AIR and Doordarshan should not be made into the mouthpieces of the ruling party only. This is a serious trend which should be immediately corrected. Through you I am drawing the attention of the House and the Government for immediate corrective measures.

MR CHAIRMAN: Shri Janardhana Poojary—absent.

Shri Satyagopal Misra.

(iv) SHORTAGE OF HANK-YARN IN WEST BANGAL

(SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA (Teml k) : Thousands of weavers in the State of West Bengal are facing unemployment due to the shortage of hank-yarn. For the same reason the Handloom Industry of the said State is also in great crisis.

In fact, West Bengal is not self-supported in the field of hank-yarn production. The total requirement of hank-yarn in the State is 15,000 bales per month. Out of this quantity, 2,500 bales are required by the Government agencies like the Handloom Apex-Cooperative Society, and 800 bales for the production of controlled cloth. But the local availability of hank-yarn is only 300 bales per month. To meet the necessity, the State Government has to depend upon the Central Government and the South-Western region of the country. Recently, the Central Government has taken a distribution system of hank-yarn; but from this distribution system, the State of West Bengal is not benefited. The hon'ble Minister of Cottage and Small-scale Industries of West Bengal has written a letter, in this regard to the hon. Minister of Commerce, Government of India. But no action has been taken so far.

The non-availability of hank-yarn is resulting in a very grave situation :

(a) Persons of vested interest are taking advantage of the situation, and the prices of hank-yarn are rising up.

(b) The poor Weavers are facing unemployment.

(c) The production of controlled cloth in the State is seriously affected by this problem.

Under these circumstances, the people, who are poor and who live below the poverty line will face tremendous hardship due to the lack in production of controlled cloth. The situation is so grave that thousands of weavers who live on handloom industry will be facing the stern reality of starvation if the Central Government do not come forward to their rescue by way of arranging for the supply of hank-yarn at a reasonable rate.

(v) NEED FOR MORE RAILWAY LINES AND A RAILWAY COACH FACTORY IN KERALA

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Movelikara) : Sir, may I bring to your kind notice a very strong feeling of neglect of Kerala by the Centre in regard to low