

12.31 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

TWELFTH REPORT

SHRI G. G. SWELL (Autonomous Districts) : I beg to present the Twelfth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

THIRTY-EIGHTH REPORT

SHRI SEZHIYAN (Kumbakonam) : I beg to present the Thirtieth Report of the Public Accounts Committee regarding the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India for year 1969-70, Central Government (Civil) relating to the Ministry of Supply.

STATEMENT RE INDIA-BANGLADESH TELECOMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA) : I beg to lay on the Table a statement regarding the India-Bangladesh Telecommunications Agreement.

Statement

As members of this house may already be aware Telecommunication Services between India and Bangladesh were established immediately following the birth of the new nation. Telecommunication Services were made available not only between India and Bangladesh but also between Bangladesh and other countries *via* India. The terms and conditions originally applicable to Telegrams and Telephone calls between India and erstwhile East Pakistan were applied as an interim measure, pending finalisation of an Agreement.

Simultaneously, the Telecommunication Administrations of both countries commenced negotiations for a mutually satisfactory Agreement incorporating fresh terms and conditions to suit the pattern of community of interest in telecom traffic between the two countries. I am happy to state that as a result of these negotiations both countries reached

full accord regarding the Telecommunication Services between India and Bangladesh and a Telecommunications Agreement was Signed in Dacca on 27th March, 1972 by Shri N. V. Shenoi, Secretary (Communications) on behalf of Govt. of India and by Shri Logman Hussain, Director General Telephone and Telegraphs, Dacca on behalf of Govt. of Bangladesh.

The salient features of the new Agreement are as detailed below:—

Telegrams :

The charge for a telegram, other than Press category, from any place in India to any place in Bangladesh will be Rs. 2.40 for 8 words or less and 20 paise for each additional word if it is of the 'Ordinary' class and twice the above rates if it is 'Express'.

For Press telegrams the corresponding rates will be Rs. 1.75 for the first 50 words and 20 paise for every 5 additional words in the case of 'ordinary' class and twice the above rates for "Express" class.

Telephones :

India has been divided into two zones for purposes of determining the telephone charges, Zone-I comprises the States of Arunachal, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, West Bengal and Tripura and Zone II the rest of India. For a telephone call between Zone I in India and Bangladesh the charge will be Rs. 6-00 for 3 minutes or less and Rs. 2.00 for each additional minute. For a telephone call between Zone-II in India and Bangladesh the corresponding rates will be Rs. 15.00 and Rs. 5.00 respectively.

Accounting

There will be no accounting of the collections in either country in respect of all telegrams in both directions and in respect of those telephone calls which originate or terminate in Zone-I. Each country will keep its own collections. In the case of telephone calls between Zone-II in India and Bangladesh, outgoing or incoming, the total collections will be divided between India and Bangladesh in the ratio of 4 : 1.

Traffic transited via India

For Telecommunication Service between Bangladesh and other countries transited via

[Shri. H. N. Bahuguna]

India, the appropriate collection rates in those countries and the transit share of India will be settled by mutual negotiations between all parties concerned on well recognised International practices already followed for other relations. Pending such negotiations the agreement provides for transit service being made available by India on terms which will involve no changes in existing accounting procedures between India and the concerned countries to or from which transit service is made available by India.

Telex

The question of providing telex service between India and Bangladesh as well as between Bangladesh and other countries via India is also under negotiations and an agreement is likely to be reached very soon between the two countries on terms broadly similar to that for Telephone Service.

The new agreement is effective from 1.4.1972.

12 33 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. CHANGE OF DATES
FOR ELECTIONS TO FINANCIAL
COMMITTEES

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING AND
TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR) :
I beg to make a submission that the dates fixed for nomination of candidates, withdrawal and election to the Financial Committees of the Lok Sabha have, for certain unavoidable reasons, to be extended. I crave your permission to request the House to agree to it. I have consulted the leaders of the Opposition also.

MR. SPEAKER : What dates do you propose?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR : I propose that the dates may be extended, and we shall mutually settle them

MR. SPEAKER : I think the House should have no objection.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour) : The proper procedure would have been to convene an emergent meeting of the Business Advisory Committee, and it should have been fixed there.

MR. SPEAKER : This matter does not concern the Business Advisory Committee at all.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : It does.

MR. SPEAKER : It is a question of mutual consultation and you have agreed.

The motion is that the Speaker be authorised to fix the revised dates. I hope all of you agree.

HON. MEMBERS : Agreed.

12.35 hrs.

RE. ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR DIS-
CUSSION ON DEMANDS FOR
GRANTS OF MINISTRIES

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING AND
TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR) :
I know that the Members are very keen to speak on the Demands of the Ministry of Agriculture, and I also appreciate that you have been very careful to see that the time fixed by the Business Advisory Committee should be observed and not extended. But in this particular case, may I request you either to place the matter again before the Business Advisory Committee or kindly extend the time by two hours?

MR. SPEAKER : Yesterday we saved about two hours. As the Minister of Communications had already taken half an hour, I thought he would be concluding immediately after Lunch, but I was surprised that he went on and on and got one hour more, which is sort of beating the record. The total time for the debate was 1½ hours, and the Minister took more than 1½ hours to reply. That was very surprising. I tried to save time and then add it to the Demands on the Ministry of Agriculture, so that all of you could be satisfied.

The Business Advisory Committee gives its report and that is approved by this House, and the time schedules are very tight, but when Members are keen to speak on the Demands of a particular Ministry, they forget the following Demands, and the result is that at the end of the session you do away with the Lunch Hour, you extend the session by one hour, sithon Saturdays. That is not a very healthy practice.