

companies have not been paying any rent for the past ten years for the sites allotted to them to sell petroleum products in the Union Territory of Chandigarh; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise to view of reply to (a) above.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister that the sites in possession of the oil companies for the sale of petroleum products are on leasehold basis or on ownership basis, and if on leasehold basis, how much amount they have paid?

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT: Sir, they are on leasehold basis. IOC has got six, HPC has got seven and BPC has got four. There was an arrangement for a certain amount of rent to be paid up to 1.1.1976 and then later on it was enhanced.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: Sir, in view of the reply given by the hon. Minister, may I know whether the Government would consider the desirability of having their own land for the sale of petroleum products on a permanent basis?

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT: Sir, it will depend on the cost of the land and the investment required. But, of course, if it is available on reasonable terms, we will definitely consider it. We are talking to the Chandigarh Administration about the rent and about other things.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU: Sir, as far as the oil companies are concerned, they are all quasi-government corporations and more so, they are autonomous also. The oil companies are taking the vacant sites on lease agreement for a certain period—five

years or ten years. After that period is over, they are not at all vacating the land to the owner. I have already drawn the attention of the Minister by means of a written communication. Even when Shrimati Sushila Rohtagi was in charge of Petroleum, I had drawn the attention of that Minister and she had replied satisfactorily. But I have not received any communication from the hon. Minister for the last two months. My question is that if a private person enters into an agreement with the Government, then automatically after the lapse of the period of agreement, he has to vacate the premises. If he is not vacating, then automatically the Government is taking the law in their own hands and with the help of the police, they are getting the premises vacated. But none of the oil companies is vacating the land even after the period is over. So, I would like to know whether the Minister will come forward to advise the oil companies to vacate the sites after the lease period is over.

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT: Sir, there are two types of cases. When the vacant land is taken on lease, the oil companies make certain investments over there and those investments go waste if the site is changed. As regards the houses and other types of property, they are protected sometimes by the Rent Control Act. But we have advised them to examine each case on merits sympathetically and when there is a genuine need, they should vacate it.

Complaints about Telephone Billing in Bangalore

*914. SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints received about wrong or excess telephone billing in Bangalore during 1986;

(b) the number of cases where it was proved to be wrong or excess billing established;

(c) the reasons for excess or wrong billing; and

(d) the action taken against those responsible for excess or wrong billing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The number of complaints received about wrong or excess billing in Bangalore during the year 1986 is 3033.

(b) and (c). There was no case of wrong billing. However, in 429 cases of complaints, benefit of doubt was given in favour of the subscribers and rebates were allowed.

(d) Does not arise as none was found responsible.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER: Sir, in Bangalore, the telephone billing is computerised. After its computerisation, the situation has become worse. To quote one instance, in my own case, for a particular month, I got a Bill for Rs. 30,000. I was shocked to know the huge amount. Certainly I did not know what to do. I contacted the authorities. They told me that it was not their mistake but it was the mistake of the computer. Then they came to know that the bill concerned was of a Parliament Member. Then they coolly withdrew that bill. That is not the only instance. Even before that in another case, there was a wrong billing. Excess billing is a regular feature. Even if it is locked, the meter will show the reading. Many other Hon. Members had also complained about this. Prof. Madhu Dandavate had also complained about it the other day. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will come out with a fool-proof method by which unnecessary taxing of the subscribers could be avoided at all cost. Top priority should be given to this matter. What steps are the Government going to take to see that excess billing is completely eliminated?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: There is no excess billing. But the fact remains that in Bangalore itself about 4,22,639 bills were sent to the subscribers. Out of those, complaints have been received from 2793 subscribers and if you calculate the percentage it works out to 0.66. This is the correct figure. If you want an all-India figure, I can give that. In 1985-86, about 1,05,90,084 bills were computed and the complaints received were 87,089. While I appreciate that in certain cases, there might be some mistakes, we always give benefit of doubt to the subscriber. You have referred to the suggestion given by Prof. Madhu Dandavate. From my experience, after coming to this Ministry, I have seen that Members of Parliament are utilising their telephones and the bills are being sent to them. Most of them are complaining about the excess billing. The hon. Speaker can only help by increasing the limit of your free calls. So far as we are concerned, both myself and my Cabinet Minister—since there is a demand of everybody we are looking into it and some decisions will be taken very soon....(*Interruptions*)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: To increase the free calls, you are also increasing the rate: which we have to pay. What is the use of it? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV; Sir, I, have personally monitored certain Numbers of some important Members and I find that in their residences, almost every minute, their telephone is busy. What you are saying is—you will not claim it. I am giving you the service, but you will not claim it

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Sir, he is tapping our telephones and our privacy is lost.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER: Will the hon. Minister kindly see that there is manual check after the bills are computerised? The bills, after received from computer, should not be sent automatically to the subscrib-

ers. There should be some manual check also. So, should there not be physical verification before the bill is sent to the subscriber? Will the Government give instructions to the Accounts Department to see that all the bills are also checked manually before they are sent to the subscribers every time?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: It is a good suggestion for consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Question no. 915-Shri Kunwar Ram. Absent. Question No. 917-Shri Krishna Rao. Absent. Question No. 918-Shri Srikanta Datta Narasimharaja Wadiyar. Absent.

Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Identity cards to electors

*901. SHRI R.M. BHOYE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken decision for issuing identity cards in favour of electors for voting purposes; and

(b) if so, the steps taken so far to implement the decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: (a) and (b). A scheme of issuing photo-identity cards to voters had been introduced by the Election Commission, for elections in Sikkim, Nagaland and a few constituencies in the State of Meghalaya. No decision has been taken so far to extend the scheme further.

[Translation]

Allotment of Accommodation to Employees of Posts and Telecommunications Departments

*902. SHRI R.P. SUMAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria adopted to allot Government accommodation to the officers/employees working in Posts and Telecommunications Departments; and

(b) whether certain percentage of quarters have been reserved for the persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for allotment and if so, the procedure adopted in the allotment of houses to persons belonging to these categories?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) The allotment of government accommodation to the individual employees in each pay group in the departments of Posts and Telecommunications is regulated with reference to the priority date, which in the case of employees entitled for allotment of accommodation in Types I to IV, is the date of continuous service i.e. the date of joining the Central Government and in respect of employees entitled to accommodation in Type V and above, is the stage of pay entitling allotment of such type of accommodation. The applications for allotment of quarters are called for once a year and waiting list prepared for each type of accommodation and allotment is made according to the turn of the employees, as and when vacancies occur in the course of the year.

(b) Yes, Sir. Reservations in the matter of allotment of Government accommodations to the Scheduled Castes/Tribes employees exists on percentage basis in respect of Types I to IV quarters. The procedure followed in this regard is that each year applications for allotment of quarters are called for from the eligible staff and waiting lists prepared for each type of accommodation separately in respect of Scheduled Castes/Tribes candidates. The actual allotment of quarter is made in the course of the year in accordance with percentage of reservation so specified. The vacancies of staff quarters under the reserve quota are shared by Scheduled Castes/Tribes employees on the