

reverse this trend. To check this trend, it is necessary to have some counter magnet towns. Work should be provided in such towns also so that the people could be attracted to live there. Besides, integrated development of all the small and medium towns is not taking place. Therefore, with a view to making these cities also beautiful, Government of India have allocated Rs. 88 crores to be spent on selected cities. Therefore, to say that a ban should be imposed on the entry and whosoever comes will have to come along with a Ration Card and then only ration will be provided will not be proper, although it has been tried by some countries but have failed in this endeavour. Therefore, I think, as long as our development is not village-oriented, we shall not be able to check migration to cities. It seems to be impossible.

[English]

Working of Doordarshan

*249. DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO† :
SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS
MUNSI :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has taken note of observations of the Prime Minister made recently regarding the working of the Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the corrective steps being taken;

(c) whether Government are considering to introduce changes in the administrative structure by appointing persons from public life in senior posts in Doordarshan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) :

(a) to (d). A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following corrective steps have been taken by the Government :

(i) the administrative and programme infrastructure is being strengthened.

(ii) a Central News Unit is being set up to improve the quality of news and current affairs programmes.

(iii) Doordarshan has been asked to ensure that it's programme project the correct values and remain rooted in the cultural ethos of the country. Programmes specially designed for the youth are being planned. Particular attention is being placed on programmes designed to fight obscurantism, superstition, prejudice and disharmony. The emphasis is on producing programmes which project the basic unity of the country and it's people.

(iv) to achieve the programming goals, Doordarshan will set up a Central Production Unit which will take up the production of important and special programmes of quality.

(v) a special software scheme will enable Doordarshan to make special telefilms and programmes concerning youth, issues of women concern, rural development and cultural heritage.

(vi) plans are a foot for training of the personnel and specialisation wherever necessary.

(vii) attention is being paid to the commercials and the sponsored schemes also. Guidelines have recently been revised for sponsored programmes and the code for commercials is under review.

(viii) the operational staff needs to acquire special skills. Two experts from the Thompson Foundation (Mr. Jim Macyntyre and Mr. Brown) are currently in Delhi to assess training requirements.

(ix) Doordarshan has involved itself during the course of the last few

months in comprehensive consultation with experts. NAMEDIA was requested to conduct a series of seminars on the role of TV in India.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO : Sir, to my question, the Minister has given a non-specific answer. Recently, the Prime Minister while participating in a panel discussion organised by the Ladies Studies Group in Calcutta had expressed a great anxiety and helplessness regarding Doordarshan. The Prime Minister said :

“We are looking at Doordarshan with a fine tooth comb (brush). The whole system appeared to be in the mess which has to be set right. This could not be done by my telling them what to do. We have to go through the administrative structure.”

This is the observation of our Prime Minister. Not only now, even previously also our Prime Minister has expressed his great concern about his constant exposure on the TV. In view of this observation, will the Minister go for an autonomous and independent body for the Doordarshan? Further, will he also consider appointing technical and expert people rather than going for IAS officers?

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : If one kindly goes through the statement which I have laid on the Table of the House, I have mentioned a number of steps, 11-12 steps, which have been taken, which are basic steps to improve the performance of Doordarshan, particularly in the light of the observations of the Prime Minister.

A meeting was held with all the senior officials about a week ago and the whole performance was discussed and the various steps taken. And I do claim modestly that there has been improvement. In the first place, I would like to say that I have not been unspecific. Specific steps which have been taken have been mentioned in the statement. I have myself gone into that several times and I can share with the House my own views,

although I am not an expert, that in the field of entertainment, the performance of Doordarshan is quite satisfactory. But in the field of information and education, a lot of improvement has to be made and I have said earlier and I say it now. We have called for several experts from outside the Doordarshan, from media and other places, even experts from abroad from the technical point of view. These are some of the steps we have taken to improve the performance. Incidentally, I may point out the effect that Doordarshan had recently in the neighbouring country, which is eloquent enough. There are two views. One view is that the person heading the organisation should be a very good administrator and the software programme part should be given to only an expert or a professional. The other view is that it should be headed by an outside professional and the administration part can be looked after by some senior administrator. Now we have taken one particular view and in our opinion that is the correct view in the present situation of Doordarshan.

DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO : We feel that the time allotted for Telugu programmes is very restricted and insufficient. A large portion of the population in different States like Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa know Telugu. But Telugu programmes are very few. So, in view of the fact that a majority of the population know Telugu, will you consider increasing the time limit for Telugu programmes in Doordarshan?

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : Sir, as far as the local station, *i.e.* Hyderabad is concerned, yes, I shall certainly consider. As far as the Delhi National Network is concerned, I have mentioned my problems in this House and you appreciated the reply that I gave on that day. We have 23 States, 9 Union Territories, 16 languages, 280 dialects and 75 per cent of our people live in rural areas and 54 per cent of our population is illiterate. There are several kinds of views—agnostic, atheistic, fundamentalist and so on. There are several demands and only one channel with 155 minutes, out of which 40 minutes go for news. So, I am left with 105 minutes. To satisfy every strata and every language in 105 minutes in a day is not an easy job. Therefore, as far as regional language films are concerned, you must have

noticed that I have introduced a regional film on every Sunday, so that the Telugu film's turn, instead of coming after 14 months, will come much earlier.

SHRIMATI D. K. BHANDARI : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is aware that a reply given by one responsible officer of Doordarshan saying that Nepali is a foreign language during a programme called 'Aap aur Hum' on 30th July 1986, has hurt the sentiments of more than six million people of the country. Nepali is one of the State Languages of West Bengal and Sikkim and it is also recognised by the Sahitya Akademi of our country. To issue such a statement when the situation is already bad in those areas where people speak this language is harmful. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he would look into the matter as to under what circumstances the officer made such an irresponsible and ill-conceived statement. I would also like to know what action the hon. Minister will take in this regard.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : About seven minutes before the Question Hour started, the hon. member met me in the Central Hall and she pointed out this thing. I have told her that I would find out.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Private talks with ladies outside should not be quoted here !

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : I have not given an assurance there. I am giving her the assurance here.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : When there is a problem already, how can this mistake be committed by the Doordarshan ? Responsible people should be there.

MR. SPEAKER : First we have to investigate and then only we have to do something.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Chowdhary, we must have the time to look into the matter.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : How can this kind of a thing happen ?

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : Why is it

that Parliament News is relayed only after all the people have gone to sleep ?

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : This question has come up repeatedly. Let me make it clear and I will take a little time Sir. There are 181 transmitters in India and about 156 transmitters transmit Delhi programmes. So, the news about Parliament in Hindi goes all over India at 7.30 in the evening through the 156 transmitters. In those places like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras where programme producing facilities exist, there the regional news is given.

At 8.40 P.M., when the National Network starts, as I mentioned just now, we give forty minutes news. Only 105 minutes are left and in that again, if we give 10 or 20 minutes news of Today in Parliament—both Hindi and English—another 20 minutes is reduced. So, what we have done is, later at night by about 11.00, we give Today in Parliament. That is the only way it can be done. But it goes all over India, the Hindi portion of it, at 7.30 P.M.

SHRI C.P.N. SINGH : Sir, the hon. Minister just now said that 75 per cent of the population in India is rural. Whenever, these new transmitters were set up, the information given by Doordarshan was that this percentage of rural population would be viewing the Doordarshan programmes. Is the hon. Minister aware that the various T.V. sets that were to be set up in the various blocks and certain districts were chosen are really functioning or not ? If he is not aware, will he set up a Committee to go into these various districts and see whether rural population selected by Doordarshan are really viewing the programmes or not ?

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : There is a misunderstanding which I must make it clear. Provision of T.V. sets is not one of the functions of Information and Broadcasting Ministry. It is the State Government which provides the T.V. sets. Some State Governments pay half of the cost and the other half is paid by the local people. We have taken up the responsibility only with regard to 5,000 sets in the North-East, i.e. Information and Broadcasting Ministry.

With regard to others, I would request my hon. friend to take it up with the State Government to find out the facts.

SHRI C.P.N. SINGH : Regarding North-Eastern States, will he try and find out whether those sets are working or not ?

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : Regarding North-East, I will certainly find out, but as far as other States are concerned, I cannot.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : Even in my State, none of the sets is working.

Minimum Wages for Bidi Workers

***250. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL :** Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether different States have fixed different minimum wages for the bidi workers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) when the latest rates of wages were revised and the States that are not paying the revised uniform wages to the bidi workers;

(d) the names of States which have arbitrarily fixed different rates of wages for bidi workers together with the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether Government propose to bring uniformity in rates of wages for bidi workers; if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 the various State Governments are the appropriate Governments for fixation and revision of minimum wages. Each State assesses its local conditions and follows its own criteria while deciding the minimum wages. This leads to disparity in rates of minimum wages notified by the States.

(c) A Statement is given below.

The Central Government has no information as to which States are not paying the revised wages to bidi workers.

(d) The Ministry is not aware of any State having fixed the wages of the Bidi workers arbitrarily.

(e) The State Governments have been advised on different occasions to make efforts to reduce the disparity while fixing the minimum wages.

Statement

According to the information available, the following States have revised the minimum wages in employment in Bidi on the dates shown against each state.

S. No.	Name of the State	Date from which revised
1.	Andhra Pradesh	26-8-85
2.	Assam	12-3-84
3.	Bihar	29-4-85
4.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1-9-83
5.	Gujarat	29-9-84
6.	Karnataka	2-12-81
7.	Kerala	4-9-84
8.	Madhya Pradesh	10-10-84
9.	Maharashtra	5-3-84
10.	Orissa	15-7-85
11.	Rajasthan	16-1-85
12.	Tamil Nadu	1-4-85
13.	Tripura	18-5-82
14.	Uttar Pradesh	21-7-84

[Translation]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to deal with the last part of the question first. The Central Government has told the States from time to time that there should be