

matter?

SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in my view the hon. Member is himself capable enough to compelling the State Government through talks. We often write to them informing them of the works remaining incomplete. In states, which make timely contribution of matching grants, lot of development works have been completed and now the percentage of urban population is 10.5 per cent. In the Sixth Five Year Plan assistance was given to the States for the development of 235 small towns and in the current plan 124 towns have been selected. Initially, 102 of them were selected and now another 22 towns have been added to the list.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, from my personal experience I can say that in the Sixth Five Year Plan, 11 towns including Sikar, the constituency of the Hon. Speaker and my own constituency, Barmer were selected. However, the money allocated in the Sixth Five Year Plan was not fully utilised and the money allocated in the Seventh Five Year Plan has also not been fully spent. The hon. Minister herself feels that the State indulging in deficit financing cannot contribute matching grants. Under the circumstances and based on her experience what does she propose to do for the backward towns, especially in Rajasthan? Is she thinking in terms of providing financial assistance?

SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already stated that the responsibility of development of small towns rests with the State Governments. For the development of these towns, the Central Government proposed to give 50 per cent assistance and expected matching contribution from the State Governments. In my opinion, the condition of small and medium towns is similar in all the States. It is neither very good nor very bad. The development can be completed only if the State Governments take pains. The Central Government is not in a position to 100 per cent finance for these schemes.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now take up the Short Notice Question.

Shri Tulsiram. Not present.

Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:
S.N.Q. 2

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: Why only epics? This is concerning only epics, not general. Why? (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Let him put his question.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Effect of Watching EPIC T.V. Serials on Eyes

S.N.Q. 2. **SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL†:**
SHRI V. TULSIRAM:

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

(a) whether Government have received any reports that the eyes of the viewers of the epic T.V. serials have been adversely affected;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the guidelines issued or proposed to be issued by Government to the general public for the protection of eyes while viewing the telecast of epic serials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (PROF. K.K. TEWARY):

(a) There is no evidence to suggest any specific damage to the eyes on viewing the telecast of epic serials or any other programme on television. The Government have also not received any report in this regard.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to hurt the feelings of anybody. I would like to know from the Government whether a survey has been conducted either by the Government or a foreign agency which has revealed that viewing black and white and colour T.V., can be harmful to the eyes, particularly in case of children? The T.V. tower set up in Delhi has not improved T.V. reception in any way. It has appeared in a magazine that viewing colour T.V. is more harmful to the eyes. A ban has been imposed in some countries on viewing of colour T.V. What steps are being taken by the Government in this regard? Will some guidelines be issued after conducting a survey so that the eyes of the children are protected?

PROF. K.K. TEWARY: Sir, as far as I know the eyes of children or aged are not affected by viewing T.V. programmes nor are they prone to injury. So far as the question of possibility is concerned, the T.V. viewers should see T.V. from some distance..... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

The distance should be nine times the size of the screen.

[*Translation*]

Sir, I would like to inform the House in this regard that instructions regarding the distance of viewing T.V. are given on T.V. from time to time, particularly in those areas where new T.V. transmitters are set up.

[*English*]

The distance should be nine times the size of the screen.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Is it circumference or radius or diameter of the screen?

PROF. K.K. TEWARY: It is circumference.

[*Translation*]

I would like to mention here that we have not been able to conduct such a survey so far but it is sure that there is no damage to the eyes by viewing T.V. serials like Ramanayan and Mahabharata and other T.V. programmes.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a possibility of damage to the eyes particularly in viewing those programmes which have been shot in the studio because of more light and brightness. I would like to know whether some survey has been conducted in this regard? We are importing the colour T.V. technology from Japan. They have conducted many surveys in this regard and they are of the opinion that the bright colour T.V. can cause extensive damage to eyes.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY: Sir, we have discussed this matter. Our Ministry issues regular warning and caution on T.V. in this regard i.e. both about black and white and colour T.V. But a lot of knowledge and information about this can be provided through the Health Ministry also.

SHRI RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the religious serial 'Mahabharat' which is shown at 10 A.M., cannot be shown early in the morning which is the best time for worshipping. Is it not a fact that the entire Sunday is wasted in this manner. The announcement is made at 10 A.M. but it starts 15 to 20 minutes later and the viewers are forced to see the commercial advertisements. Cannot

it be shown at 7 A.M. so that the people may utilise the rest of the day purposefully? No one can go out of his house before 12 noon or 1.00 P.M. due to the serial and because of summer season, no one can work during the afternoon. The evenings, when people get some time, is occupied by the Sunday feature film. It not only affects the eyes of the children but adversely affects their health too. Sunday is for playing and enjoying picnics. Instead of playing matches, youngmen and children sit idle inside the house for the serial. What is the justification in fixing such a time for the serial which wastes so much time of the people. Some time is wasted in witnessing cricket matches being played in different parts of the world and the Sunday holiday is wasted by these serials. Will the hon. Minister tell something about it?

PROF. K.K. TEWARY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not think that the people who are interested in viewing epic serials 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharat' consider it a wastage of time. They view them with reverence... (*Interruptions*) and with great interest.

So far as the time is concerned, one episode of Mahabharat is of 50 minutes and the people have advance information about the time, so it does not waste their entire day. If the hon. Member has any objection about the timing, it can be reconsidered but it is not true that the entire day is wasted for a 50 minute serial..... (*Interruptions*)... I think on Sunday people have enough time to view T.V. serials. I do not say that everybody likes to view T.V. serials. There are many people who utilise their time in other activities. Therefore, we can consider the suggestion of the hon. Member regarding timings but it cannot be telecast at 8 A.M. because it is the time for news... (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: News is telecast at 7.30 A.M.... (*Interruptions*)

PROF. K.K. TEWARY: What I mean to say is that the suggestion of the hon. Minister

regarding change of time can be reconsidered.

[*English*]

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe the question has been hijacked. The Minister for Information lacks the information in regard to his own Department. He stated in his answer that the TV does warn the viewers as to the distance from which they should view the TV. I am a regular TV viewer. I may tell you that I have not so far heard TV warn about distance even once. (*Interruptions*) It is not my case. But the TV has not uttered any warning at all. The point I was trying to make was that the TV has not given enough and repeated number of warnings in respect of the manner in which TV should be viewed. Would the Minister take note of this and take necessary steps in this direction?

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Kindly tell us the distances from which the members of ruling party and those of opposition should view the T.V.?

[*English*]

PROF. K.K. TEWARY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member Mr. Reddy has accused me, but I have not tried to hijack the question. I was replying to the question put to me by the hon. Members of this House. Secondly, we have telecast warnings from TV, especially in areas where new transmitters are installed. So, we have done it. I can also inform the House that special reference has been made to blindness. There are agencies in the Health Department and they have been going around arousing public awareness about this. From our side, from our Ministry, we have been giving this caution on TV and we will do it again.