

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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*Tuesday, May 14, 1985, Vaisakha 24,
1907 (SAKA)*

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER : You are sitting alone today Professor Sahib ! Where are your colleagues ? Shri Narain Chand Parashar.

[*English*]

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Question No. 833.

Introduction of Photophones

*833. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to introduce photophones in the country so as to keep pace with the advanced countries in the field of tele-communication;

(b) if so, the likely date by which the photophones are proposed to be introduced; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a), (b) and (c). Introduction of video phone or

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picture-phone service will necessitate special tele-communication network...(*Interruptions*).

[*Translation*]

AN HON. MEMBER : Shri Parashar wants to see the picture also.

MR. SPEAKER : What we speak is more important than the form (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

AN HON. MEMBER : It is required by young men.

PRO. MADHU DANDAVATE : This will be disadvantageous to ugly persons, Sir.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER : You just say so to somebody and see the result.

[*English*]

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : (a) to (c). Introduction of video phone or picture-phone service will necessitate special tele-communication network covering very wide band of frequencies. This will involve relatively large investments with little added commercial value. Hence there is no proposal at present to introduce such a service in the country.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Sir, even in foreign countries where this photo phone is available, it is only on a selected basis. Therefore, when India is trying to match with other countries in the advancement of science and technology, would it not be possible to have it at least on an experimental basis in a select group of cities or at least one city in the country ?

AN HON. MEMBER : Select persons also.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : We donot want to copy all that is happening abroad but we want to take in and adopt things which would really be relevant to our own needs and requirements. But so far as picture phone is concerned, even in USA there has been no significant development and even the British telecom do not intend introducing it till 21st century. So, it is not correct to say that even in other countries they have introduced it on an experimental basis on commercial lines. It has not yet been introduced and I do not think we should like to go into this.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : It is very much relevant now. We are taking India into 21st Century and I do not know why the Minister is fighting shy of it.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : Well, Sir, it is true, but as I said, we do not want to copy everything that is happening in the West or abroad. We want to go into the 21st century but in a way that suits our local requirements. So far as other aspects of tele-communications development is concerned, we are very much ahead of many other countries and we will continue to do so. But in the frill areas like this, which we do not think is really very necessary and important for the development of tele-communications, we would go very slowly.

MR. SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister does not want to have a long jump, he wants to go slow and steady.

Setting up of Indo-French Joint Commission for Oil and Gas Development

*835. **SHRI YASHWANTRAO GADAKH PATIL :** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to set up an Indo-French Joint Commission for oil and gas development in the country;

(b) if so, whether any decision has been taken in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN

THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (**SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA**) : (a) No, Sir.

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

[*Translation*]

SHRI YASHWANTRAO GADAKH PATIL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I want to know from the Hon. Minister whether any talks were held in this regard between India and France, and if so, when ?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : Mr. Speaker, there is collaboration between India and France in the field of Petroleum and this collaboration is in progress at various levels. But so far as the question of the Hon. Member regarding Indo-French Joint Commission is concerned, there is no proposal to set up such a commission. So far as collaboration is concerned, it covers a wide area and we have collaboration with many companies in this field. Besides, during the visit of our late Prime Minister to France in November, 1981, Memorandum of Undertaking, embodying promotion of cooperation in different fields, was signed in four cases. These included the field of energy and the field of hydro-carbons. Therefore, our efforts to increase collaboration with France continue.

[*English*]

Public Call Offices in Calcutta

*836. **SHRI BIMAL KANTI GHOSH :** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the present number of Public Call Offices (PCOs) in Calcutta as compared to the number of PCOs in Bombay, Madras and New Delhi;

(b) the reasons why Calcutta is lagging behind other cities in the matter; and

(c) the steps, if any, taken/proposed to increase the number of Public Call Offices in Calcutta ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS