

through any call. Even now that does not function. Such is the state of affairs with regard to MPs. I can now well understand and we have apprehensions that there is tapping also.

MR. SPEAKER: This does not relate to the main question. Please put a relevant question.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: In regard to STD facility, the telephones should be kept in proper order so that those who are entitled to this facility are not actually denied of it.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: In the first place, I would like to disabuse my friend's mind from the notion and tell him that MPs have got no exclusive or special facility for STD. Nothing like that. STD is available to all people who have got a telephone connection which has got STD facility. If an MP starts dialling STD, he will find himself in a soup, finding that after a few STD calls, he reaches 500 calls limit and he will have to go on paying money. Let my hon. friend be freed of that notion and be aware of that.

As regards STD call, there is a mechanical operation. It must go through different exchanges and then only a call can land up. The machine and the wire do not show any special respect for the Members of Parliament or the Ministers.

Minor Irrigation in drought Prone Areas

***309. SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to increase the allotments under the Minor Irrigation to drought prone areas; and

(b) if so, the amount to be increased during Sixth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) and (b). Allocation of funds for minor irrigation for drought prone areas under the Sixth Five Year Plan is under consideration of the Government.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: May I know whether it is a fact that the State Governments have sent proposals to increase allotment for minor irrigation in drought prone areas and, if so, whether the Central Government is going to accept their proposals?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: As I have already stated the allocation of funds for minor irrigation for drought prone areas under the Sixth Plan is under consideration. The proposals of all the State Governments will be taken into account while a decision is taken. In fact, so far, the minor irrigation programme has been carried out under the Drought prone Area programme (DPAP). It has been left to the State Governments to make allocations for minor irrigation works under the programme. The guidelines are provided by the Centre, 50 per cent expenditure is met by the Government of India and 50 per cent matching expenditure is incurred by the State Government. So, the Central Government has no specific programme of incurring expenditure on minor irrigation alone.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: May I know whether the funds will be given for exploration of ground water and, if so, whether the Government is giving subsidy for boring wells to agriculturists and also carry water from wells to the fields through cement pipes?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: That is a separate programme, the Command Area Development Programme which helps the farmers. That programme we are already implementing. But the hon. Member's suggestion for further help will be examined if

the proposals come from the state Governments.

As regards exploratory tubewell works, this is being undertaken by the Central Groundwater Board. Exploratory tubewells have been sunk in the past. But recently this programme has been transferred to the States under the recommendations of the National Development Council. It was done by the last Government.

PROF. N. G. RANGA: May I know how much do all these proposals sent by the State Governments amount to? Have they sent any proposals at all and if so, for how many crores of rupees they have sent their proposals and when those proposals are going to be considered and by whom? It is by the NDC or only by the Planning Commission?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: As I stated, the Central Government has Drought Prone Areas Programme under which subsidies are given for minor irrigation works also, along with various other schemes. And we have a scheme of giving Rs. 7.5 lakhs per Block under the DPAP, and an equal amount is to be spent by the State Government for each Block. So far, we have been meeting expenditure on that basis. But if the allotment is to be increased, that will be decided after taking into account the proposals from various State Governments. That has not been done so far.

PROF. N. G. RANGA: Have the proposals been called for?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Yes.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: These general plan allocations are indicated every year in the Budget documents. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he has seen the Budget presented to Parliament in which it is shown that the annual Central Plan allocations for DPAP, Command Area, etc., have been drastically reduced and if so, whether the Minister has taken up the matter with the Finance

Minister asking him to restore those drastic cuts that have taken place as compared to the amounts allotted during the Janata rule.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: There are 557 DPAP Blocks in the country in 74 districts, and the allocation for each Block, as stated, is Rs. 7.5 lakhs. That stands.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: I wanted to know whether it is a fact that the allocations for the Command Area Programme, Drought Prone Area Programme, etc., have been cut in the Budget and whether he has taken up the matter with the Finance Minister asking him to restore those cuts.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: We have the scheme of giving Rs. 7.5 lakhs for each Block, and that will be provided.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINH: It is a fact that, under the Drought Prone Area Programme, no provision is made for restoring the old projects that need to be restored? It only envisages construction of new works. There are so many old projects in all these 74 districts that need to be repaired and a representation has been made to the Government for changing the policy. Has the Government taken this into consideration?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The DPAP has a very wide coverage for various schemes. It takes up works for reducing the severity of the impact of the drought, stabilising the income of people, particularly the weaker sections, restoration of ecological balance; and then under various other schemes, development and management of water resources is undertaken, soil and moisture conservation measures are also taken up; then afforestation too; then development of pasture lands—these are all providing assistance for the existing facilities. Then under new schemes, surface water and construction of reservoirs can be taken up; then construction of tanks, check dams, construction of bunds—these are

various schemes apart from the schemes for benefiting the individuals.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI: Due to error of judgement previously, under the DPAP, some chronically drought affected areas are not covered. May I know whether the Government or the Minister is considering to include under this Programme these chronically drought prone areas which have been submitted by the State Government of Orissa? These chronically drought affected areas are not covered by the DPAP whereas some places around those areas have been covered. For example, Padampur sub-division, Bango Munda, Kaprakole, Chanda Handi Block, etc., have been submitted by the State Government of Orissa. May I know whether the Minister is considering to include those areas under the DPAP? These areas have suffered drought for more than fifteen years.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The drought-prone areas were identified on the recommendations of the State Governments and the Central teams. As I said, the whole country is not yet covered under the scheme. There are only 557 blocks so far taken up. Then there are other schemes for other areas also. Assistance is given also under the Integrated Rural Development and Desert Development Programmes. So, we are trying to see that the entire country is covered under one scheme or the other for benefiting the people in the drought-prone areas.

MR. SPEAKER: Next Question—
Shri Narayan Choubey.

Shri Indrajit Gupta.

Then Question No. 311—
Shrimati Pramila Dandavate.

Shri Arjun Sethi.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: On the basis of surname, can I ask the question, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: I may not allow it.

Next question—Prof Ajit Kumar Mehta.

Shri R. L. P. Verma—he is here.
Again that epidemic is setting in.

News-item 'A much wanted Nuisance'

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*312. **SHRI R. L. P. VERMA;**
PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "A much-wanted nuisance" appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated 2nd June, 1980;

(b) the nature of difficulties faced by the telephone subscribers; and

(c) the remedial action contemplated in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KARTIK ORAON):

(a) Yes, Sir. The Department is aware of the article which appeared in the Indian Express dated 2-6-1980

(b) Nature of the grievances faced by the subscribers as pointed out in the article are as under:

(a) Getting wrong numbers and engaged tone.

(b) Lines faulty for prolonged periods.

(c) Excess Billing.

(d) Misuse of telephone by unscrupulous elements.

(e) Non-registration of complaints.

(c) The article itself spells out some of the measures being taken. The highlights of the Department's programmes are:

(i) Addition of new lines.

(ii) Strengthening of the Area Managers organisation.

(iii) Opening of District Complaints cell.