

doing. (*Interruptions*) That is the effective range. But the main important aspect of this increase is to now cover more rural population which was uptill now 26.89 lakhs and with this increase it will increase to 58.26 lakhs and instead of 2523 villages it will now cover 5180 villages. That is the most important thing

SHRI XAVIER ARAKAL : It seems the policy of the Government is to give more and more facilities and luxuries to a selected few of the big cities. I have been asking in this house to use the microwave systems and towers time and again. Now my question relates to this point. A vast majority of this country is not covered with television facilities and if the existing microwave towers and systems are used, we can cover a large population. Now both the Ministers are here and I am very happy to note that. May I ask the Hon. Ministers? Will these two Departments co-ordinate and make use of the existing microwave system and towers so that we can have a wide range of facilities in our country?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : This matter is under close examination of our two Ministries. A small group of experts has already been constituted. They are looking into how the existing microwave towers could be used for television relay facility as well. If that is sorted out—because they have to see to the technical feasibility also—I know a very large area in this country can be covered through the existing microwave system by a relay system of television transmission.

Additional Powers for Press Council

*167. **SHRI G. M. BANATWALLA :** Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal to confer

additional powers on the Press Council of India to take action against newspapers which incite communal passions and preach violence ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI VASANT SATHE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal is to confer additional powers on the Press Council of India to empower it to recommend, in case of newspapers censured three times or more within a given period by it on grounds covered by Article 19(2) of the Constitution of India, to the Central and the State Governments and to the Public Sector Undertakings etc. (a) discontinuation of advertisements (b) dis-allowance of any growth rate in the allocation of newsprint or (c) suspension of the concession in the matter of postal registration of such newspapers for specified periods.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : By what time is this proposal likely to be finalised and brought into force ? In view of the urgency of the problem, let the Minister not be very evasive saying 'as soon as possible'. I hope he will give a definite reply to this.

One more point and that is with respect to recommendations. There is a recommendation that there may not be any growth rate in the newsprint quota. Why not in the case of such papers an outright suspension or reduction in the quota of newsprint ?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : This is a matter for the Press Council to consider. They have asked for certain additional powers. Even the Press Commission has in its report now approved that such powers be given to the Press Council and, therefore, we are examining it. But I

may say that before giving such powers, they must also codify or lay down guidelines of what they consider as offending against the standard of journalistic ethics or public taste, because it is this on which they will censure. So unless they first lay down—just as you have in the film certification or the censorship a guideline—certain guidelines for this ethics—it is a body of the Press people—it is very difficult to just give powers and become arbitrary. Therefore, we are going to take up the matter with the Press Council and ask them if they can evolve such a code of conduct.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Sir, we do not know yet as to the time by which we can expect the enforcement of the proposal because the matter must be expedited. However, as the situation stands today, may I know whether the Ministry has taken any action against papers, if so, against how many and, what is the languagewise break-up?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : No, Sir. The Ministry does not take any action by itself because there is no provision. The normal law of defamation etc. are there. If, somebody wants to take action, they can do it under the normal law. There is no legal provision to-day by which the Ministry can take any action against the erring journalists. That has to be done essentially by the Press Council. Therefore, as I said, the Press Council has not codified what they consider as the journalistic ethics the breach of which will become liable for punishment or censure.

श्री राम विलास पासवान : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं माननीय मन्त्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस सम्बन्ध में प्रेस कौंसिल के पास क्या अधिकार है? क्योंकि इमर्जेंसी के समय में हमने देखा है कि सारी चीजों को संप्रेस कर दिया जाता है।

इसलिए क्या प्रेस कौंसिल गवर्नमेंट के इशारे पर चलने वाली बाड़ी है या प्रेस कौंसिल का कोई स्वतन्त्र अस्तित्व भी है? मैं जानना चाहता हूँ इस सम्बन्ध में अभी तक प्रेस कौंसिल के पास क्या अधिकार हैं?

श्री वसन्त साठे : प्रेस कौंसिल का जहां तक सवाल है, यह एक स्टैट्यूटरी बाड़ी है, गवर्नमेंट के इशारे पर चलने वाली बाड़ी नहीं है। इसके जो सदस्य हैं, यदि मैं आपको उनके नाम बताऊँ तो कानून के अन्दर जो विभिन्न सस्थायें हैं उनके नामजद प्रतिनिधियों की यह संस्था होती है, कोई खाली सरकार द्वारा नियुक्त प्रतिनिधियों की संस्था नहीं होती है। इसीलिए आज प्रेस कौंसिल में जो मेम्बर्स हैं उनमें एडिटर्स के रिप्रेजेंटेटिव सेक्शन 5 (3) (अ) के अन्तर्गत हैं—सर्वश्री अरुण शोरी, एस० के० बोस, ओ० पी० शाह, विनोद मिश्र, एस० रामस्वामी "चौ", डी० एस० सोधी और वर्किंग जर्नलिस्ट्स के रिप्रेजेंटेटिव हैं—

सर्वश्री एस० विश्वम्, ए० राघवन, श्रीर रंगराजन ...

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : नाम तो हम सभी जानते हैं।

श्री वसन्त साठे : इतना जानते हुए भी कि राम जेठमलानी, उमा शंकर जोशी फिर भी आपकी तसल्ली नहीं

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : इन्होंने नाम नहीं पूछा है, अधिकार पूछे हैं। आप नाम पढ़कर हमें प्रभावित करना चाहते हैं?

श्री वसन्त साठे : आप कैसे प्रभावित हो सकते हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : वाजपेयी जी नाम से प्रभावित होने वाले नहीं हैं।

श्री बसन्त साठे : वे खुद के नाम से भी प्रभावित नहीं होने वाले हैं। कानून जो बना है उसको यदि आप देख लीजिए तो सारे अधिकार आपको मालूम हो जायेंगे। वे और ज्यादा अधिकार चाहते हैं जिन पर अभी विचार चल रहा है। (स्यवधान)
अभी इमरजेंसी का भूत लगता है आप पर छाया हुआ है।

श्री मनीराम बागड़ी : हमें जेल का डर लगता है। आपको भी जाना पड़ेगा।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप लोग किसी अच्युती जगह पर जाने की कोशिश कीजिए।

Change of Policy to allow Foreign Drug Companies to Maintain Higher Equity

*168. PROF. RUP CHAND PAL :

SHRI R. P. DAS :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are changing their policy and going to allow the foreign drug companies to maintain their higher equity and also going to allow them to enter into the core sector areas ;

(b) if so, the reasons for the same ; and

(c) how Government are going to improve the effectiveness of the Indian drug manufacturers ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR : (a) and (b). There is no proposal to bring about any change in the Policy on dilution of

foreign equity of foreign drug companies under the Drug Policy as also the guidelines issued by Government for administering Section 29 of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act. Foreign drug companies are already allowed to enter the core sector (Appendix I) areas.

(c) In the 1978 Drug Policy there are a number of provisions for giving preferential treatment to Indian companies in the drug industry. Besides, the scheme of registration with DGTD has been continued in respect of the drug industry. This facility is available only to Indian non-MRIP units. A large number of DGTD registrations have been given after the announcement of the Drug Policy.

PROF RUP CHAND PAL: Sir, my question has been evaded. My question was in view of the proposed liberalisation in the FERA Act that is done by the Finance Ministry whether the foreign drugs companies are going to be given more opportunities in regard to their equity. But the reply has been given that there is no proposal change policy of dilution of foreign equity. Sir Finance Ministry has formulated proposals to modify the FERA Act and my question was whether any liberalisation was going to be affected with regard to the multinational drugs companies operating in India ?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: Sir, I do not know what my Hon. friend means by the expression modifying the Act. There is no such proposal so far as modifying the Act is concerned and there is no proposal to dilute the Drug Policy that has been enunciated in 1978 with reference to the equity participation of the foreign companies so that they enhance their equity participation.

PROF RUP CHAND PAL Sir, the Chairman of Hindustan Lever the other day made an announcement