

of car telephones, why don't you go in for introducing the computerised telephone system so that it may help the blind people to operate it? Why don't you make some efforts?

**SHRI VASANT SATHE :** As I said, we are making this effort-computerised telephones not only for the blind but for others also. There are now techniques which are coming, where memory is put into the telephone. Whatever numbers you want to dial, the telephone itself will go on dialling. So, it is not only for the blind. We are not aware here whether there are any telephones, computerised telephones, exclusively meant for the blind anywhere but as I explained, our own push button system and other telephones that we are evolving would be useful for the blind as well. I am telling you that at the present stage, we have introduced push button system which has that raised dot which will be helpful for the blind.

**SHRI UTTAM RATHOD :** I think the intention of the questioner is to find out the possibility of employment for the blind people. Now, there are blind people who are working on the switch boards. May I know whether it would be possible for them to have adapted telephones being produced in our country which can be easily operated by the blind people?

**SHRI VASANT SATHE :** I think this push button system and the redialling system will help the blind also to operate easily, even from employment point of view.

**Increase in duration of AIR and  
TV Programmes**

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\*1022. **SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA :**  
**SHRI YASHWANTRAO**  
**GADAKH PATIL :**

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

(a) whether there is a proposal to increase the duration of the A.I.R. and T.V. programmes and make them practically round the clock programmes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the additional expenditure involved in implementation of the scheme has been considered?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR) :** (a) to (c). Considering the heavy expenditure involved in obtaining of technical equipment and setting up of transmitters and recruitment of additional staff, it is not possible immediately to have AIR and TV programmes round-the clock. However, enhancement of AIR broadcast and Doordarshan telecast time progressively is under the active consideration of Government.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is correct that the T.V. programmes cannot be telecast round the clock due to lack of resources. But, Sir, there are various countries in the world where this is being done. In our country also, in the near future the production, centres are going to be increased from the present 13 to 48. Keeping this in mind, will the Hon. Minister assure the House that as soon as the number of these centres is increased to 48, he will not only provide T.V. signal facilities in farflung areas but also increase the duration of telecast time? If 24 hours transmission is not possible, he should try to increase the transmission time to the extent possible.

**MR SPEAKER :** You put the question.

**SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA :** Because there is a wide gap between the breakfast T.V. and evening transmission.

[*English*]

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT) :** I can understand the anxiety of the Hon. Member and his question talks of two things. The first

is that he says that we should be able to give TV signals to farflung areas and the second is to increase the telecast time. So far as giving TV signals to farflung areas is concerned, the problem of hardware expansion is under our very active consideration. We are trying to expedite the implementation of the scheme sanctioned under the Seventh Plan Scheme. As I said the other day, we are actively exploring the possibility of mobilising the resources from our Ministry for getting equipments so that we could have more TV transmitters of various categories, particularly, to cover the farflung areas, distant areas, border areas and tribal areas. I can assure the Hon. Member that within a year or two, the TV service which is existing today will be far more increased in hardware area and many of the areas will be covered. It requires trained personnel; it requires TV transmitters; it requires so many things. I can assure the Hon. Member that we are looking into that with seriousness which it deserves. He is right in saying that in certain countries, there is round the clock telecast. But we cannot compare with those countries, some of which are very small countries and they began long ago. As far as the TV expansion in this country is concerned, while I would readily concede that the TV requirements of this country, with its dimensions, size, various problems, development, culture, history, are not adequate, yet, TV expansion in this country has been the fastest in the world; I am not saying it was in a short time, but we had the expansion and we are going for further expansion.

As far as the increase in the telecast time is concerned, I cannot give an assurance that within this specific time we shall be able to go in for longer duration telecast, but we are working gradually and we will have to phase it out. We want to increase the telecast time in the case of national and regional channels. We are actively considering it. Even today I had a meeting and we will announce after some time the gradual increase in the telecast time.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with the Hon. Minister

that the speed with which T.V. has expanded in our country for the last 4-5 years is miraculous and it is a very good thing. The policy of the Government is that this programme will be given priority in the tribal areas and in the hilly areas. But in spite of Government's directions, no proper action is being taken on this. When Hon. Shri Sathe was the Broadcasting Minister, he had stated in his written reply that Chaupan Renukut area fulfilled the norms set by Government of India and this facility would soon be extended there. But this facility has not been provided there so far. I want to know whether the imbalance created in the expansion of T.V. will be removed and further, whether in some backward areas which lack other facilities, the facility of T.V. centre will be provided? Will the hilly areas and the tribal areas be given a priority as per the policy of the Government?

[*English*]

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : Firstly, with all respect, I would tell the Hon. Member that the percentage of population covered in the case of UP is more than the national average. The reason is that when last time we went in for expansion, I gave you an assurance that we were giving the best possible attention to the remaining areas not only of UP, but all parts of the country. But if you ask me about particular areas, I can give you the details about station; we are going to have. This is a continuous process. But I would say that the criteria that we had kept at one time with regard to special expansion was that towns with a population of a lakh and above would be covered. Now we are covering other areas. I have already said that we are giving attention to tribal areas, far-flung areas and distant areas. It is not that these areas are not being attended. Lots of tribal areas, hilly areas and distant areas are covered. There is no discrimination. If there is any discrimination, I assure you that it is going to be in their favour.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFUOR : Is there any scheme for introduction of TV for the blind men, as my friend just now said that there is a scheme in telecommunication for the blinds? Have you got any scheme for the blind men?

**SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT :** I also read it in the newspapers. I think, I have to learn certain things from my Hon. friend, technology and others. If I could have it, I would not mind.

[Translation]

**MR. SPEAKER :** He has become too foresighted.

[English]

**SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHURY :** At a number of places, we have got the second channel, but we do not know what is telecast on the second channel. There is a long standing demand that the second channel of TV be handed over to the State Government so that proper coverage is given to the local culture and thereby we strengthen the unity of the country. Are you going to accept it?

**SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT :** He is an Hon. Member and very young. I would say with great affection for him that we have answered it earlier also that we do not consider it proper... (Interruptions).

I can get into the details. At the moment I can give him an assurance that for the purpose for which he is talking, i.e. giving local programmes on local culture, with local thrust and all that, we are going to improve the Second Channel. Certainly in the Committees, etc. the local view point shall be taken while improving the Second Channel.

#### LPG Connections in Gujarat

\*1023. **SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD :** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of LPG connections allotted in Gujarat as on 31 December, 1987 and the district-wise waiting list for LPG connections in the State as on above date; and

(b) the year-wise allotment of LPG connections during the last three years in Gujarat and when the existing waiting list for LPG connections is likely to be wiped out fully?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT):**

(a) As on December 31, 1987, there were about 13.63 lakh LPG consumers in the State of Gujarat. Districtwise waiting list is given in the Statement below.

(b) The total number of LPG connections released in Gujarat during the years 1985-86, 1986-87 and 1987-88 were 1.78 lakhs, 1.95 lakhs and 1.39 lakhs respectively. New LPG connections will continue to be released by the oil industry all over the country, including in Gujarat, in a phased manner under its annual programme for enrolment of customers, subject to augmentation in availability of LPG and bottling capacity.

Statement		No. of persons on waiting list for LPG connections (as on 31.12.87)
Name of the District		
1. Ahmedabad	—	1,13,648
2. Baroda	—	47,846
3. Bharuch	—	12,012
4. Gandhinagar	—	10,419
5. Mehsana	—	33,197
6. Panchmahal	—	12,998
7. Kheda	—	19,821
8. Surat	—	80,245
9. Valsad	—	12,676
10. Rojkot	—	37,794
11. Kutch	—	3,118
12. Amreli	—	3,068
13. Bhavnagar	—	24,956
14. Jamnagar	—	3,716
15. Surendranagar	—	1,149
16. Junagadh	—	16,208
	—	
17. Sabarkantha	—	3,400
18. Banaskantha	—	5,804
<b>Total :</b>		<b>4,60,374</b>