

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 28th February, 1996/9th
Phalgun 1917 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN *i in the Chair*.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM:
Good morning, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good morning.
...(Interruptions)...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Good
morning, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good and calm
morning. ...(Interruptions)... They say good
morning!

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: To-
day there is a ceasefire. ...(Interruptions) ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 21.

Projections for Telecom Services

*21. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO:
DR. SHRIKANT RAM-
CHANDRA JICHKAR:!

Will the Minister of COMMUNICA-
TIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the realistic projections of important
telecom services for the next five years;
and

(b) what part the Department of tele-
communications will play in providing
these services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The projections
are given in the enclosed statement. (*Sec*
below)

(b) Para 1 of the statement shows ser-
vices to be provided by Department of
Telecommunications. Para 2 of the state-
ment shows services to be provided by
private operators to be licensed by De-
partment of Telecommunications.

Statement

*Following are the projections of impor-
tant telecom services categoryw'tse upto
year 2000:*

1. *To be provided by Deptt. of Tele-
communications*

1.1 Basic Telephone Service: 2? 4 mil-
lion direct exchange lines.

1.2 ISDN service: To be extended to all
major cities in the country based on demand
projections.

1.3 Intelligent Network service: Services
like Free phone Service, Virtual Private
Network, Credit Card Calling,
(Premium Rate Services to commence
during 1y96-97 at Mumbai. Thereafter
Intelligent Network services to be extended
to other metro cities.

1.4 Long Distance Satellite Telephone
Services to be given on demand in remote
and inaccessible areas.

1.5 Telegraph Services: Express Money
Transfer Service to be extended to about
200 centres.

1.6 Mobile Telephone Service:

(i) Paging service in New Delhi and
Mumbai (MTNL); At New Delhi
643 connections are working. At
Mumbai 3849 connections are
working.

(ii) Mobile Satellite Service: INSAT
mobile satellite service will be able
to serve an estimated 1000
subscribers.

1.7 Data Service:

(i) Inet service: Inet has 2923 con-
nection and has a registered demand
of 3123. Inet to be expanded to
cover 89 cities and expected to
provide connections.

(ii) HVnet service: This is a VSAT
network being established with a
capacity to serve 200 subscribers.

(iii) RABMN service: 560 subscribers
are connected on this VSAT net-

work. There is a capacity to serve about 1000 subscribers.

- (iv) Internet service: With a beginning from 22 cities, to be expanded to other places depending upon growth in demand.

2. *Services to be provided by private licensed operators:*

- (i) Basic telephone service.
- (ii) Mobile service like Cellular telephones, radio paging, satellite mobile telephones, radio mobile trunked telephone services.
- (iii) Value added services like E-mail, audiotex, videotex, video conferencing, voice mail, data/fax broadcasts.
- (iv) 64 kbps data network service using VSATs for closed user groups.

The licensed operators will do the marketing for these services.

ISDN, IN, Value Added Services and all types of mobile services are emerging new services in the country. These are likely to be provided on demand to the subscriber. These will be provided through the public switched network either privately operated or by the DOT.

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Sir, in 1992-93, the Economic Research Unit of the Department of Telecommunications had conducted a survey about the percentage of telephone subscribers who pay an average amount of subscription per month. It suggests that 86 per cent of the telephone subscribers pay less than five hundred rupees per month. So, the new private licensees who would come, would entice the upper bracket who use it by something known as 'telecom deluge', which has appeared in the Press. My question is whether this will lead to less revenue or whether the realistic projections which the hon. Minister has so nicely given would be fulfilled.

SHRI SUKH RAM: We will fulfil the realistic projections because these are the

figures given by the E.R.U. We have already exceeded the targets which were fixed for the current year, for the last year and for the last three or four years. So, we have been achieving the targets. Not only have we been achieving the targets, but we have been exceeding them. The next part of the question that the hon. Member has put is whether this creamy layer will be shared by the private operators or not. Because we have got a vast network throughout the country, and we have yet to start and it is 10 to 15 per cent of the subscribers who contribute about 70 per cent of the revenue, which we are getting and because we are modernising our services and this competitive environment will do some good for the Department also. I do not think that it will be possible for them to entice the revenue of the creamy layer.

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Sir, in the statement the hon. Minister has mentioned *...(Interruptions)...* the services to be provided by the Department of Telecommunications and the services to be provided by the private licensed operators. Many services overlap *...(Interruptions)...* Basic telephone service *...(Interruptions)...* Sir, there is some interference. *...(Interruptions)...* There seems to be some interference from the satellite telecommunication. *...(Interruptions)...* I think this is what is overlapping. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Sir, this is a mixed economy. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, this is an example of the mixing up of private telecommunication and public telecommunication.

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: This will be overlapping. *...(Interruptions)...* My supplementary deals with this type of overlapping. Sir, the Department will be providing some scr-

vices; the private operators will be providing some services. In the list we can see that there is overlapping in the case of basic telephone service, Internet service, I-net service, etc., etc..

Now, what mechanism the Department of Telecommunications will have to regulate in monitoring and controlling this sort of overlapping the demonstration of which we just saw?

SHRI SUKH RAM: Sir, there is no overlapping. But there is competition between the two. For instance, as far as basic services are concerned, there will be two operators in each circle. One is the DOT and the other is the private operator. But the potential is so big in all the circles that they can exploit it and as I have already said, our network is so wide throughout the country that there will not be any problem for us to enhance our targets and we are already enhancing the targets. As far as this overlapping and then the other operators are concerned, they will be regulated because I am bringing forward this Regulatory Authority Bill before this hon. House. And it is the job of the regulatory authority to ensure that there is no injustice and the consumer's interests are protected.

We have provided for a lot of avenues in the Bill. Then you can see that we have given a lot of powers to the regulatory authority and I think they will regulate the performance of the DOT as well as the private sector.

SHRI R. MARGABANDU: Sir, advocates are playing a predominant role in public service. Moving with the public whether desirable or undesirable, they risk their lives. They need urgent, communication. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether advocates can be included in the priority list in giving phone communication like doctors?

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of House by Dr. Slirikant Ramchandra Jichknr.

SHRI SUKH RAM: There will not be any problem now because I think the entire waiting list is about 2.5 millions and that will be wiped out. We will try to find out whether it can be wiped out by the end of this financial year or within the next six months. Though most of the exchanges are becoming current, there will not be any objection if the hon. Member wants some category to be included for giving priority. I have no objection to that.

श्री नरेश यादव : सभापति महोदय, मैं आप के माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानकारी चाहता हूँ कि पिछले वर्ष 1995-96 में बिहार के लिए टेलिकम्युनिकेशन के मद में कितनी राशि का आवंटन किया गया था? क्या वह सभी राशि खर्च कर दी गई है या वह राशि वापिस करने की भी कोई योजना है? मेरे कहने का मतलब यह है कि जो राशि बिहार के लिए आवंटित की गयी थी, वह राशि खर्च हो गयी है या विभाग वापिस कर रहा है?

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : सभापति महोदय, मैं दो बिन्दुओं पर मंत्री महोदय से जानकारी चाहूँगा। पहला यह कि अभी हाल में जो टेंडर हुए थे, उस में पब्लिक सेक्टर को लायसेंस का टेंडर नहीं देने गया था। तो क्या यह सरकार की परमानेंट पालिसी है कि आगे से भी जितने टेंडर होंगे उस में पब्लिक सेक्टर को नहीं देने दिया जाएगा? नंबर दो, अगर प्राइवेट सेक्टर मल्टी-नेशनल कंपनीज लगा सकती हैं तो डी.ओ.टी. को भी करने देने में क्या एतराज है क्योंकि आजकल बहुत से पब्लिक सेक्टर के लोगों ने मल्टी नेशनल कंपनीज के साथ जो जाइंट कागकाज शुरू किया है? तो डिपार्टमेंट आफ टेलिकम्युनिकेशन को ऐसा करने में क्या बाधा है?

श्री सुख राम : सभापति जी, डीओ.टी. या पब्लिक सेक्टर को टेंडर में पार्टिसिपेट करने के लिए डिबार नहीं किया था। यह हमारा जो क्लैरिफिकेशन है, उस में बड़ा क्लिअर है। मगर उस में मेजर पार्टनर वह इस वास्ते नहीं है क्योंकि एक तरफ तो डी.ओ.टी. है और दूसरी तरफ पब्लिक सेक्टर है और पब्लिक सेक्टर को इक्वटी पार्टिसिपेशन के लिए सरकार के पास ही आना पड़ेगा क्योंकि हम जो यह कांफिटेक्टिव एनवायरनमेंट लाना चाहते

हैं इस वास्ते ताकि वहां कांपिटीटिव इनवेस्टमेंट कर सके। डी.ओ.टी. इनवेस्ट करे और और दूसरा प्राइवेट सेक्टर इनवेस्ट करे, मगर वह माइनर शेयर-होल्डर अगर किसी कंपनी के साथ आना चाहता हैं तो उससे उसको डीबार नहीं किया गया हैं।

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : सर, वही तो हमने पूछा। आप माइनर की कंडीशन पब्लिक सेक्टर के साथ लगाते हैं अभी, प्राइवेट सेक्टर के लिए नहीं लगाते। यह जो पालिसी हैं आपकी क्या यह स्थाई पालिसी हैं कि इसी तरफ डिसक्रिमिनेट करेंगे पब्लिक सेक्टर को? और, जहां तक आप फंडस लाने की बात कहते हैं, वह भी फंडस ला सकते हैं। उसमें क्या लगता हैं। अगर आप लेते हैं दूसरों से, प्राइवेट वाले ला सकते हैं तो डी.ओ.टी. भी दूसरे से ला सकता हैं, मल्टीनेशनल से ला सकता हैं। जब यही देश चलेगा, तो उनको क्या आप रोक रहे हैं? यह जो आपकी पालिसी हैं, इसके बारे में क्लैरिफिकेशन चाहिए।

श्री सुख राम : वैसे मैंने कोशिश तो की, मगर फिर मैं आपको बता देना चाहता हूं कि क्वेश्चन हैं इन्वेस्टमेंट का और जहां तक डी.ओ.टी. का ताल्लुक हैं, हमारा अपना रेवेन्यू जो जनरेट करते हैं, उसको हम इन्वेस्ट करते हैं। यह कोई एम.टी.एन.एल. वगैरह या बांडस बगैरह से रोज करते हैं हजार, पन्द्रह सौ करोड़ रुपया, बाकी हमारा अपना हैं।.....(व्यवधान)...

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : वह भी बैंक या फाइनेन्सियल इंस्टीट्यूशन से ला सकते हैं।.....(व्यवधान)...

श्री सुखराम : एक मिनट, आप मुझे थोड़ा टाइम देंगे। दूसरा जो पब्लिक सेक्टर हैं, पब्लिक सेक्टर को अगर हम यह इजाजत दे दें तो एक तरफ डी.ओ.टी. और दूसरी तरफ पब्लिक सेक्टर, क्योंकि दो ही आपरेटर होंगे, वह, डी.ओ.टी. तो एक हैं ही, मगर दूसरा आपरेटर अगर पब्लिक सेक्टर हुआ तो उससे तो इक्विटी पार्टिसिपेशन के लिए सरकार के पास ही आना पड़ेगा।

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : नहीं जाएगा। आप जब उसे दे देते हैं(व्यवधान).....Sir, this is my question precisely. The public sector can also get money from outside, from the financial institutions. Why does the Minister say that they will have to come to the Government? It may not be so. He should clearly explain the things so that we can understand. (Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Why not allow the public sector to go to the market?

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Yes. This is what I am saying. (Interruptions)

श्री सुख राम : सर, मैंने पहले ही कह दिया हैं कि पब्लिक सेक्टर को डीबार नहीं किया गया हैं, मगर दो रीजन की वजह से एक इन्वेस्टमेंट और दूसरा टेक्नोलोजी, यह दोनों रीजन हैं। माइनर शेयर होल्डर वह बन सकता हैं। उसमें कोई दिक्कत नहीं हैं।

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Sir, the Minister is confusing us again and again. (Interruption) If the private sector can get technology from other countries, the public sector can also get it. I am citing the example of the Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL), which has entered into agreements with the Siemens and the GEC and which are getting technology as well as funds. So, in that case, why can't the D.O.T. do that, why can't the public sector do that in telecommunications? (Interruptions)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, Minister has been misleading the House. The public sector unit, the Indian Telephone Industries, was prevented from filing the tender. It is a fact of life. Only towards the close, they permitted the public sector. There was not enough time for the public sector to do anything in the matter. (Interruptions)

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: Sir, the point is that the very purpose of this policy was to privatise. Now, the public sector is inefficient and it is not doing a good job. (Interruptions)

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: But, Sir, he is not the Minister. (Interruptions) The Minister is capable enough to reply. We are asking the Minister. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Singla, please take your seat. The Minister is answering. (Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: In the Parliament's history, now there is a shadow ministry in the ruling party also. *(Interruptions)* There should be a shadow ministry in the Opposition, but now there is a shadow ministry in the ruling party also! *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please listen. The Minister is answering. *(Interruptions)*

श्री सुख राम : सर, ऐसा हैं, मैंने न कभी पहले माननीय सदन को गुमराह किया हैं और न अब मैं कर रहा हूं। यह जो टेप्डर कंडीशन्स हैं और जो एक्सप्लेनेटरी नोट हैं

इसमें हमने बड़ा क्लिअर किया हुआ हैं कि वह पार्टिसिपेशन कर सकते हैं, मगर उनकी प्रब्लम यह हैं, पब्लिक सैक्टर के बारे में आप जानते हैं कि उनकी आर्थिक स्थिति क्या हैं। उनको 100 परसेंट इक्विटी पार्टिसिपेशन में, अगर वे लोन पर एक ही रुपया इन्वेस्ट करना चाहते हैं, तो उसमें जो एक स्परिट इस टेलिकाम पालिसी की हैं कि इसमें ज्यादा रुपया बाहर से, विदेशों से लाया जाए, विदेइन कंट्री मोबलाइज किया जाए ताकि जितना रुपया हमको दरकार हैं, वह रुपया आए, क्योंकि यह बड़ा केपिटल इंटेंसिव भी हैं, टैक्रोलाजी इंटेंसिव भी हैं, तो यह शर्त उनसे नहीं हुई डी.ओ.टी. से और फिर एक बात और हैं कि जो हमारे पब्लिक सेक्टर हैं, हमारे पब्लिक सेक्टर में मेन्यूफेक्चरिंग की इतनी स्कोप हैं कि अगर वे मेन्यूफेक्चरिंग में ही लगे तो जब प्राइवेट सेक्टर आ रहा हैं, हमारा अपना, उसी में उनका बहुत बड़ा पोर्टेंशियल हैं, उसी को एक्सप्लायट करें।(व्यवधान)...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, what is this? *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Singla, please sit down. You cannot explain on behalf of the Minister.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Sir, I seek your protection. *(Interruptions)*

The Minister is evading the question. I seek your protection. The hon. Minister is evading my question. It is not correct. Now, if he says: 'Yes; the public sector is finished once and for all', I have nothing to say;

it is for the Government to decide. But when the policy of the Government, as far as the public sector is concerned,....

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Mishraji, it is a question of competition between the public and the private sectors.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: I stand for that. I agree with that proposal. But my question is, why should there be discrimination against the public sector?

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: There is no discrimination.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: He should tell us why. He is saying that he has put certain conditions; that the public sector can have only minority equity participation. This is also wrong. He is saying that the public sector cannot get money. I gave you the instance of Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited. They entered into an agreement with Siemens and GEC. They got capital also. They got advanced technology also. Similarly, our DOT, the public sector telephone industry, can do it. This is the way we can develop and India can become a centre for this. Why is this opportunity being lost by us in favour of some multinational companies? This is my question.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: The (Supreme Court has vindicated.

SHRI SUKH RAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, that thrust of the National Telecom Policy is to create a competitive environment in the country. With the DOT on the one side and the public sector on the other side....

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Private sector.

SHRI SUKH RAM: The thrust is to have a real competition between the two. Apart from....

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: DOT is not in the public sector.

SHRI SUKH RAM: Apart from the investment problem, there cannot be a competition. As I have already stated....
(*Interruptions*)

They can become a partner (*Interruption*)

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, my hon. friend is missing two things. One is that the public sector in India has done well. Some of our public sector companies have made remarkable strides in technology also. I would, particularly, mention Bharat Electronics Limited. Therefore, to say that we cannot cope with technology and, therefore, we should impose conditions in regard to import of technology is, to my mind, perhaps, an understatement or non-understanding of the situation.

Secondly, he says that the public sector cannot raise funds from abroad. My friend, the Petroleum Minister, is sitting here. Wherefrom they are getting funds? Some of his companies have raised funds from abroad. It is, therefore, unfortunate for the hon. Minister to underrate our public sector, to denigrate our public sector. He says that they cannot cope with the technology. He says that they cannot cope in terms of getting money from abroad. He also thinks that they can get only second-rate technology. It is strange when he says that the public sector must confine itself only to manufacturing activity. If this kind of a thing had been said by somebody in America, I would have understood, but when such a statement is made by a Minister of the Indian Government, I am deeply worried about it.

SHRI SUKH RAM: Sir, the policy of the Government is that the private sector has to be inducted into this field in order to cater to the needs of the people of this country.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: We are not objecting to that.

SHRI SUKH RAM: I give you one instance.

As far as the density is concerned, it is 1.2 per cent. It was less than 1 per cent four years ago. Now we have to come up to the modest level of 6 per cent. You need about \$18 billion in order to come up to that stage. You can yourself imagine that our public sector is depending upon subsidy and help from the Government. The main objective was to attract more and more money from other countries and to mobilise the resources within the country so that whatever resources and technologies are needed for telecommunication are available. They are available from the private sector partly. The public sector also can invest, but it is not in a position to invest the money needed in this field. That is why this is a considered view...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, only one point. Let us talk about the specific industry, the telephone industry. The Indian Telephone Industries has been running in loss. ...(*Interruptions*)

Please let me speak. Mr. Singla, will you please sit down?

The Indian Telephone Industries which is engaged in the manufacturing activity has been running on loss for the last two years only because it did not have the market. Some problem was there about import. So, it wanted to diversify. The Ministry told it to diversify. One of the things into which it can diversify is basic telecom services. Why should it be deprived of this access? The ITI is a public sector company. It is an autonomous company. Let us not talk about public or private. Why should it be deprived of the level-playing field? It thought that it could cope with it. This is my question.... (*Interruptions*)

You will not understand anything. (*Interruptions*) Why should the, Indian Telephone Industries be not given access to diversification, apart from manufacturing where it is not finding the market? This is my specific question.

Mr. Singla, it is not your business.

SHRI SUKH RAM: I agree with the hon. Member that the ITI has been a very good public sector undertaking. But, now, when there is a competition with the private sector, the problem has arisen. There used to be administered prices. I can quote you a number of instances where the public sector was charging very high prices. For instance, it was charging about Rs. 35 lakhs for one equipment. With the coming in of the private sector and the competition, now the price has come down to Rs. 7 lakhs or Rs. 8 lakhs against Rs. 35 lakhs (Interruptions)

Please listen to me.

Now, the hon. House has to judge whether we should continue with the administered prices or let them charge whatever they like. At that time they were doing very well.

In order to give them good business, I have made a reservation of 35 per cent for the public sector. Out of the total quantity, they will get 35 per cent. If they are H-1, in addition to 35 per cent, they will get more (Interruptions)

The hon. Member himself has said that it is undergoing losses. Is a company which is undergoing losses in a position to invest money in a competitive environment?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 22.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: Sir, you permitted me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have really taken half an hour on this. The Minister has answered it adequately.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: The Minister has not answered it, Sir.

Relief and Rehabilitation Package to 1984 Riot Victims of Delhi

*22. SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of relief and rehabilitation package so far given to 1984 riot victims of Delhi; and

(b) the number of victims who are yet to be rehabilitated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SYED SIBTEY RAZI): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Under the directions of the Government of India, Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi has undertaken various relief and rehabilitation measures for the victims of November, 1984 riots. The details of schemes as on 31.1.1996 are as under:

1. COMPENSATION IN CASE OF DEATH/INJURY:

Financial assistance in the form of compensation has been given to next of kin of those who have suffered either death or injury during the riots. The compensation in case of death has been given @ Rs. 20,000/- per death and for sustaining injuries, it was between Rs. 500/- and Rs. 2000/-. The number of claims settled so far is as follows:

No. of Claims settled	Expenditure incurred
(i) Death 2564	Rs. 512 Lakhs
(ii) Injury 2603	Rs. 54.62 lakhs

2. COMPENSATION IN CASE OF DWELLING UNITS:

The loss to the dwelling units of

The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sanjay Dalmia.