

Increasing the Rates of DAVP Advertisements

76. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING pleased to state:

(a) whether DAVP advertisement rates remained low and not increased since January, 1999; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to raise the rates early?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) The rates for release of Government advertisements by DAVP were revised with effect from 1st January, 1999 on the basis of the recommendations of the Rate Structure Committee. With a view to recommend a new Rate Structure, the Government have already set up a new Rate Structure Committee.

New FM Channel by Prasar Bharati

77. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Prasar Bharati has decided to start new FM channels;

(b) if so, the main features and terms and conditions; and

(c) the names of States where these will be started?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) Four New FM Channels have been started by Prasar Bharati from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, with effect from 1.9.2001. The channels are broadcasting programmes for 18 hours every day, of which 35% time is allotted to News and Current Affairs programmes and 65% to Entertainment. These channels are intended to be made into classic channels by broadcasting the music of Maestros, past and present, in addition to hourly News in Hindi, English and Regional Languages, from the three metro stations other than Delhi.

Abolition of Wage Board

78. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Newspaper Society is demanding that the Wage

Board should be done away with to reduce burden on newspaper establishments; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to Ministry of Labour, since the recommendations of the Manisana Wage Board have been accepted recently these would remain in force until the Award of next Wage Board. The constitution of the next Wage Board is, therefore, not under consideration.

Decline in the Quality of DD's programmes

†79. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 20 percent people in the country have no access to Radio/Doordarshan's programmes even today;

(b) if so, the details thereof, state-wise/area-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that quality of Doordarshan's programmes has been failing continuously; and

(d) if so, whether Government are contemplating to formulate any scheme in order to check the same?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

Terrestrial coverage of Doordarshan is presently estimated to be available to about 89.1% population of the country. Doordarshan programmes are available in satellite mode throughout the country. All India Radio programmes are presently received by approximately 98.82% of population in the country. State-wise coverage figures for AIR/DDs are given at statement (*See below*).

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.