

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BIR BAHADUR SINGH) : (a) The Government is aware that some private organisations/individuals are providing services for collection, transmission and delivery, often violating the provisions of Indian Post Office Act, 1898, which, *inter alia*, invests the Central Government with an exclusive privilege of conveying letters within India and for performing all related incidental services. According to information so far available, 80 such firms' agencies are operating in the country.

(b) In absence of any power for search and seizure (the offence being a non-cognizable one), the Department of Posts has to proceed against parties suspected of infringing the provisions of Indian Post Office Act, by lodging a complaint with the police. Cases in which further police investigations conducted in legal prosecution showed that the organisations/individuals use their services for carrying letter, thereby violating provisions of the IPO Act which invests the Central Government with an exclusive privilege of conveying letters in India and for performing all related incidental services.

•(c) The exclusive privilege invested with the Central Government under the provisions of the Indian Post Office Act is restricted to letters only. The services provided by the organisations/individuals mentioned in part (a) of the answer, do not infringe the provisions of Indian Post Office Act, so far as they relate to

goods, documents etc., other than letters. Government do not have any data about traffic handled by such organisations/individuals. Hence, no estimation of the loss can be made.

(d) Whenever infringements of the relevant provisions of the Indian Post Office Act come to light, action is initiated under the provisions of law. As on 30th June, 1988, 86 cases are under trial in different Courts of the country.

Authorisation for Tapping of Telephones

1469. SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Governments have sought authorisation from the Central Government for tapping of telephones of certain individuals and organisations;

(b) if so, the list of such State Governments and the respective officials who sought the authorisation on behalf of their States and the date for such requests; and

(c) whether amongst those whose telephones were tapped, there were any political leaders?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BIR BAHADUR SINGH): (a) No, Sir. As per provisions of Section 5(2) of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, a State Government is empowered, to order

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interception of messages under certain circumstances.

(e) and (c) Do not arise.

Curbing of expenditure on technology

@4470. SHRIPRAMOD MAHAJAN :
SHRIPRITHIBIMAJHI:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has any plans of curbing recurring expenditure on technology transfer;

(b) what measures are being contemplated to ensure that technology transfer payments are kept to the bare minimum; and

(c) whether his Ministry are aware that technology transfer payments can be substantially reduced by insisting on transfer of technology via capital equipment supply?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO) : (a) to (c) The import of technology is basically governed by the Technology Policy Statement of the Government. Import of technology is allowed selectively and only after the evaluation and scrutiny. It is the continuous endeavour of the Government to keep payments for import of technology, including technology via capital equipment supply, to the minimum and steps are taken to strengthen indigenous

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technology base thereby reducing dependence on foreign technology.

Interim relief for the Master Craftsmen of Heavy Engineering Corporation Ranchi

4471. SHRI SAMAR MUKHER-JEE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a memorandum signed by about one thousand Master Craftsmen of Heavy Engineering Corporation Limited, Ranchi has been received by Government;

(b) whether they have demanded for the payment of interim relief as is paid to the Chargemen of HEC;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Ranchi of the Patna High Court has observed that Master Craftsmen and Chargemen are equal in all respects;

(d) if so, what are the reasons for not paying interim relief to the Master Craftsmen; and

(e) whether any steps are being taken to pay interim relief to them?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Payment of Interim Relief to Public Sector Units

4472. SHRI SAMAR MUKHER-JEE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government had sanctioned interim relief to the employees of the public sector