

Making DD's Urdu channel mandatory for cable operators

2474. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Doordarshan's ambitious plan to project Urdu culture and its heritage to the large Indian Diaspora has taken off in terms of viewer's demand, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the amount of investment that has been incurred to launch DD's Urdu channel globally including Middle East, South Asia, Europe, Central Asia and Africa;

(c) the number of cable operators that has subscribed to the channel;

(d) whether the ministry is considering making the channel mandatory for cable operators for making it popular among the audience; and

(e) by when, it would become mandatory?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Prasar Bharati have informed that Doordarshan has launched an exclusive channel in Urdu on 15.8.2006. The satellite channel has its footprint in the countries in Indian sub-continent, South-East Asia and Middle East (Gulf).

(b) Prasad Bharati have informed that till date approximate expenditure on hardware and software is Rs. 10.99 crores.

(c) It is a free to air Channel. Therefore, no formal subscription by the cable operator is required.

(d) and (e) As on date the Urdu channel has not been notified for compulsory transmission by cable operators in their networks. There is a suggestion to make Urdu channel compulsory for all cable operators to telecast. However, no time frame can be given.

Record of Injustice against PIO's

†2475. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether record of the incidents of injustice meted out to the People of Indian Origin is maintained in our embassies;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi