

[Shri P. A. Sangma]

labour It has been receiving the attention of the Government. Now the share of women in the total employment in this country is about 12.6 per cent. But over the last four or five years—I have been looking at the figures—there has not been much improvement in the employment of women! The trend is, there is a marginal increase. I should say a very negligible increase. So the women employment in the country is more or less 30 per cent. We have to generate more employment opportunities for them. We have to instill more confidence in them. We have a number of schemes for them like ITIs. We have 91 ITIs run by various State Governments exclusively for women. We have about 97 other ITIs where they have a wing for women entrepreneurs. We have about 30 ITIs under the private sector having a total capacity of 14,973 seats. These ITIs have already given lot of training to them. Then, we have National Vocational Training Institute for women at Delhi, Regional Vocational Training Centre in Bangalore, Bombay and Trivandrum. During the Seventh Five Year Plan we intend to set up another five Regional Vocational Training Institutes for women. These steps are being taken by the Government. But the allegation has been that those who violate Equal Remuneration Act and those people who are exploiting the women labour in this country are not being punished. I think the figures which I have given are not very encouraging. In 1984 there has been 1,189 inspections out of that in 167 cases, prosecutions were launched and only in 40 cases, convictions have been done. In 1985 there is a slight improvement. The number of inspections that were conducted were 1,563...

SHRI S. W. DHABE: Why don't you impose fine?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: That is the main point. I am happy that you have raised that point. Out of 1,563,259 or 289 prosecutions have been done and only in 77 cases, convictions have been made. Now, the question is: what is this conviction? In most of these cases the conviction is a fine. As I have said earlier, in many of these places the penal provisions

which exist in this Act appears to me to be an incentive for violation of this provision, because it is much easier for them to pay the fine rather than complying with the provisions of this law.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Why don't you change it?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Yes, there is a need to change it. There is a need to make the penal provision more stringent.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Why don't you provide for imprisonment instead of fine?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Yes, we will do that. I think during the next session of the Parliament—I do not know—how many amendment Bills I will be bringing. I think it will be more. But only one thing I want to say on this ground is that many hon. Members have stated that the Labour Ministry has become a Ministry of law making and they are not implementing the laws. But this is not correct. Had we not implemented the laws we would not have detected these deficiencies and would not have come before Parliament for amendments. The very fact that we are able to find out the loopholes in the Act testifies that we are really implementing the law. But I will not claim that it has been implemented very effectively. I will not claim that. *(Interruption)* There are many loopholes in the Equal Remuneration Act. For example, section 5 of the Act says that there will be no discrimination between men and women in matters of recruitment. But it has been interpreted by many others particularly by the employers that this discrimination can be there while they are in employment.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri M. P. Kaushik) in the Chair]

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Discrimination cannot be there when they are in recruitment but in employment, there is no provision about that. That is why, I think it has to be changed and we have to bring in an amendment that even while in employment, there should not be any discrimination.

Another loop-hole may be in section 12 of the Act. May I assure you that we are going to change that. A recognised leader, a recognised State Union and a recognised social welfare organisation will be allowed to launch a complaint against the offences committed under this Act and the Police will have to take cognisance of all that. In line with Section 7 of the Uowry Act, we have been thinking. This is only at a thinking stage but I can assure you that we shall be looking into it and we will be bringing a comprehensive Bill here also.

Another area of unorganised sector is the beedi workers. I do not know whether I should deal with it. May be, I will speak something about some sectors which some hon. Members have referred to. According to our statistics, there are 32.75 lakhs beedi workers in this country but this is an estimate and since the beedi industry is an unorganised industry, it is almost a cottage industry, it has been very difficult on our part even to execute some of our welfare programmes even to bring them under the purview of the Provident Fund Act. We have found it difficult because we do not know who is a beedi worker? Therefore, when we talk of the beedi worker the first and foremost thing for us is to identify as to who is a beedi worker and give him or her an identity card and once we know who is a beedi worker and once we identify him or her, then it will be easier for us to launch the welfare programmes and bring them under the purview of the Act. We have made a drive to issue identity cards and as on today, about 15 lakhs workers have been issued identity cards which itself is a very big thing and I hope, the remaining 17 lakhs identity cards are going to be issued to them within the next four months' time. That is the maximum time we are going to take and once we do it, we can certainly extend to them lot of facilities.

I do not want to deal with the contract labour because only the other day, we had an occasion of discussing this contract labour thoroughly where Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta has had no occasion of shouting at me. I do not think, I need to repeat those things today on contract labour but I must say something about

the bonded labour which is a very important thing. Now, it is one of the priorities under the 20 Point Programme of the Government of India and I can assure the House that we will go vigorously to see that bonded labourers are identified and they are rehabilitated. My only problem is that the identification and rehabilitation of the bonded labour has to be done by the respective State Governments. It is within their jurisdiction and we can only press them which we have been doing.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Even when it is in public sector.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: If it is in public sector, we do it.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: In certain public sector enterprises, the contract labourers working there are aU of a bonded kind. In such cases, I think, you can act.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I have no knowledge. If you have any complaint, please give it to me. I will certainly look into it. But as of now, I have no complaint that bonded labour exists in the public sector undertakings or in Central undertakings.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I may help the Minister. There has been a specific report appearing in a Calcutta daily known as Telegraph that the contractors used by the Metro authorities are employing bonded labour in the metro construction work. I bring this formally to your notice. A report to that effect has appeared in the Telegraph.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: I do not know. Maybe there is a possibility of contract labour being employed there. I will not dispute that because if the metro work is going on, there may be contract labour. But I certainly cannot accept that there are bonded labourers in that. I cannot accept that.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: We will be satisfied if you say that you will make an investigation. There was

[Shri Nirmal Chatterjee] a report about BHEL also. I am just ^ringing it to your attention.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Okay. As on the 31st December, 1985, the number of bonded labour identified was 1,91,615. A'bout 1,44,284 have already been rehabilitated. But still there are 47,331 yet to be rehabilitated. Now under the Centrally sponsored schemes for rehabilitation of bonded labour, earlier we had been granting a sum of Rs. 4,000 for rehabilitation. Now, with effect from the 1st February, 1986, we have increased it to Rs. 6,250. I am sure this will go a long wa_v to make better rehabilitation of the bonded labour.

Now, a lot of questions have been raised on safety, but the House has had many occasions to discuss about safety also. It is one of the areas where we have been paying maximum attention, specially after what has happened in Bhopal and Delhi; Apart from these two major incidents which were tragic, the general trend is that the number of injuries and serious accidents has been coming down. For example, the total number of injuries in factories in 1983 wa_ 3,49,254. In 1984, it came down to 3,02,726. The number of people killed in 1983 was 864. In 1984 it came down to 824. This is about the factories. If you look at the figures in the mines sector, even here it has been coming down. In 1984, the number of serious accidents was 1,632. In 1985 it came down to 1,390. The number of injuries in our factories has shown a decline of about 13.3 per cent over 1983.

Various measures are yet to be taken. We are looking into it. Here again comes the question of penal provisions. I do not want to repeat it. We are having a close look at the Factory Act and we will make necessary changes, necessary amendments in the Factory Act, so that strict safety measures can be enforced. We may have to strengthen the Inspectorate machinery also, and many other

things. I have had a number of meetings with the Labour Secretaries and various other Departments of the Government of India.

SHRI S.W. DHABE: What about automation in the newspaper industry calling a meeting of the tripartite committee?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: I have noted your suggestion. Then there was a general point made

SHRI KAPIL VERMA; A formal commitment was made by the Labour Minister, y\$ur predecessor, on the floor of this House that a tripartite conference would be called on automation.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: I will have a look at it. But before I forget I shall answer your question raised yesterday on the Wage Board for Journalists. I told the House that I was expecting the report or the recommendations of the Wage Board by today, i have just been informed that the Wage Board would be submitting their recommendations at 6.30 today. *(Interruption)* So I want to be there in time, in honour of m_ journalist-friends. I do not want, therefore, to prolong my speech here. *(Interruptions)*

One general point was made about employment. As regards the battle against unemployment, I may inform the House that in the beginning of the Seventh Five Year Plan, according to the Planning Commission, it wae about 9.2 million; now, over the Seventh Plan about 39.4 million will be added to that. As against this total of 9.2 million-(-39.4 million, the Seventh Five Year Plan is expected to generate additional employment o* the order of 40 milion. Thus, by the end of the Seventh Plan we hopt that the backlog of unemployment will be-substantially reduced.

There was another point made about ESI. I don't need to reply to much about ESI. But I am aware of the fact that ESI hospitals are no* working properly...

Discussion concluded

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA. Will you kindly reply to my question on the one-day strike in coal industry? Eight days' wages are being deducted for one day's strike. Do you, as a Labour Minister, consider it to be unjustified and do you promise this House that you will take up the matter with the Ministry of Energy and something will be done on your behalf to see that this atrocious action is dropped? Hundreds of workers are being given notices that you have joined an illegal strike and eight days' wages would be deducted. I draw your kind attention to this repeatedly and I request you to give some sort of an assurance that you will be lifting your finger—I do not want you to lift your hand but lift your finger—in defence of the seven lakh workers who had been on strike at the call of INTUC, CITU, AITUC and everybody else? Please give us an assurance on this issue...

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I have already noted it...

SHRI VIJAYA MOHANA REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): In Andhra Pradesh at the intervention of the Chief Minister this provision has been removed.

श्री कैलाश पति मिश्र (बिहार) :
रोहतास इंडस्ट्री के बारे में आपने कुछ नहीं बताया। रोहतास इंडस्ट्री के बारे में यहाँ मैंने कहा था कि तन साल से वह बंद है और 60 से ज्यादा लेबरर्स की मृत्यु हो गई है।

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : I am aware of the problem in Rohtas Industry, I am constantly in touch with the Government of Bihar about it. A lot of representations have come to me from many honourable Members of the House, and I have written to the Chief Minister recently. I am in touch with the Government of Bihar in this matter.

Then, as far as coal is concerned, I have noted it and I shall certainly look into it and speak to my colleague in the Ministry of Energy.

There are many other points which have been raised and I shall be replying to the honourable Members.

With these words I once again thank honourable Members _____

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय : मान्यवर, हिन्दुस्तान समाचार और समाचार भारती के जो कर्मचारी हैं इनका 8 महीने से लेकर 20 महीने तक का वेतन बढ़ाया है। बहुत से कर्मचारी काम छोड़ कर दूसरी जगह चले गए हैं। उनको अभी प्रोविडेंट फंड मिलना है, ग्रेच्युटी मिलनी है, इसके लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं ?

5.00 p.M.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Sir, they had a meeting with me and they had met my colleague, Mr. Gadgil, also and we are aware of their problems. I must inform the honourable Member that at my intervention and at the intervention of Mr. Gadgil, many of them had got themselves absorbed, quite a number of them, not all of them, and they have been taken in the PTI and the UNI and it is only because of our intervention.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: What about the implementation of the Palekar Award? (Interruptions).

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: What about the payment of salary, gratuity and Provident Fund, etc. to them? (Interruptions).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. KAUSHIK): The Minister has already replied to all the points. Now, we go on to the next item on the agenda.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Just a minute, Sir. At the outset, the Minister greeted the workers on the occasion of the May Day Centenary Celebrations. I would like to know from the honourable Minister whether he will assure the House that in memory of the May Day martyrs in India

[Shri Sukomal Sen]

the workers, whether in the organised sector or in the unorganised sector or even in sectors like the railways, transport, etc., will be assured of eight-hour duty only instead of the present long duty hours. Even the ten-hour duty has been refused by the locomen. I would like to know from the honourable Minister whether the system of eight-hour duty will be introduced for the entire working class in this country on the occasion of the May Day Centenary Celebrations tomorrow.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Sir, is it the Question Hour now? I thought the deb-bate was over long back.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Sir, I would like to know from the honourable Minister whether he will recommend to the industrialists of the country to allow a paid holiday tomorrow to enable the workers to celebrate the May Day Centenary in a befitting manner.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. KAUSHIK): If you want you can give a clarification; otherwise not.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: No, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. KAUSHIK): Now we go on to the next item on the agenda and we will have the discussion on the working of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Yes, Mr. M. A. Baby.

DISCUSSION ON THE WORKING OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

SHRI M. A. BABY (Kerala): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, for having given me the opportunity to initiate the discussion on the functioning of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Sir, I would like to preface my speech with a quotation from the Annual Report of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for the year 1985-86.

'The objective of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is to inform,

educate as well as entertain with a view to creating awareness among the people "about the nation's potential for development and its problems, widening their horizon and soliciting their participation in the implementation of the policies, plans and programmes of the Government for bringing about economic development and social change, achieving national security and promoting national integration. In short, the Ministry provides, through its media units, a live audio-visual link between the people and the Government."

The statement, the so-called statement of objective, of the Ministry is very eloquent. But the problem that we face today is that this pronouncement by the Ministry in its Report and the practice by the Ministry are not in agreement with each other. You will find a wide discrepancy between the promises, proclamations and claims of the Ministry on the one hand and its actual performance and practice on the other. In this situation, though the statement says that the objective of the Ministry is to project the achievements and the developmental process in the country, the Ministry is intended to place the problems faced by our country also. I would like to bring to the notice of this august House that in the matter of placing the problems that our country faces today, the Ministry's efforts are a total failure, to use an euphemism. Here, again, I would like to make a quotation from Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. While making a speech on March 5th, 1962, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru said—I quote:

"I feel that freedom from ignorance is as essential as freedom from hunger. The mass media which are very useful have an element of danger in them in that they may be distorted for private gain. The rich group or the rich nation can flood the country and the world through the mass media with its own view of things which may or may not be the correct view."

Sir, more than 20 years ago, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru made this statement. As things stand today, the situation is worse,

and so far as the responsibility of placing the problems of our country is concerned, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry could not achieve anything. On the other hand, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry can rightly claim about projecting the achievements of the country. Here I would like to add that rather the Information and Broadcasting Ministry is projecting an inflated picture about the achievements of our country. I am not stating that there are no achievements in our country. There are achievements. There is progress in our country. I do not say that there is no progress. But in comparison to the desired level of progress, and again in comparison to the distribution of achievements and progress between the various sections of people, the picture is very dismal. But, unfortunately, this fact, this reality, is not being brought to the notice of the masses of our country and the official media has been failing in placing the realities of our country, in reflecting the problems of the country, through the official media and mass media.

Here, Sir, I am not ignoring or undermining the valiant role of a section of our Press in placing the problems of our people in correct perspective. Various periodicals and journals have been bringing the gruesome conditions in which the people in far flung villages, small towns and even in cities, live. In the shadow of skyscrapers and posh clubs, millions of people live a miserable life. We say that they live only because they are not yet dead. Otherwise their's cannot be termed as life at all. So their problems have been brought to the notice of the nation by some sections of the Press, some journalists and some media men. But as enunciated in the objectives of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry Report, while projecting the achievements of our country and showing to the people all the perspectives of development in our country, it is the responsibility of the Ministry to bring to the notice of the people that such and such problems are there in our country, that these are the sad realities that exist in our country. In relation to this responsibility I would like to say that the performance is a total failure.

Sir, not only that, our official media fails in bringing forth the realities of our country to the notice of the masses of the people. Not only Indian reality is not reflected in official media like TV and Radio, but irrelevant foreign imports are allowed without any limit. The dangerous and growing trend is in relation to the copying the format and even taking the idea from foreign productions. If at all we make our own programmes in the country, the ideas and format in the case of most of the programmes are being taken from so many foreign productions. An example at hand is in relation to the serial—that I think has been stopped now—known as 'Khandan'. The format and the idea and the way the whole thing was presented have been copied from a foreign production 'dynasty'.

In addition to it, Sir, I would like to quote from Shri P. C. Joshi's report in relations to the Working Group on Software for Doordarshan;

"Most relevant for our purpose is the Commission's observation that 'it is in the field of television, more than any other, that anxieties arise about cultural domination and threats to cultural identity.'"

This is the Commission's report quoting from the famous MacBride Commission of 1980 whose title is "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problem". I quote again:

"This is because television has a 'strongly transnational face'. Being a hungry medium, it has to be fed all the time. The production of television programme is a highly expensive business for which the poor countries are not always able to provide adequate resources. As a result, in most developing nations the screens are filled for many hours with imported programmes, made originally for audiences in the developed countries; these imports account for half of transmission time. Further, the home produced

[Shri M. A. Baby]

material is often a poor second to imports in the daily programming of developing countries. Another major threat to national culture arises from cheap and titillating programmes produced within a country which are projected through the television day in any day out in order to fill television time."

In this connection, again there is another very relevant and thought-provoking paragraph being quoted in this Report from the MacBride Commission's Report of 1980.

"The best answers to injurious foreign influence are not to be found in negative restrictions. Such influence is most irresistible when it flows into a relative vacuum" (as in the case of our country). People can scarcely be blamed for welcoming even the most worthless and shallow forms of foreign entertainment especially when it is presented, let us remember, with utmost technical sophistication, if the indigenous cultural forms have been allowed to decay. To remain alive, genuinely popular and attractive, these forms must be constantly renewed by fresh talent and fresh content. Writers and artists should be given full encouragement by the community and the appropriate organisation, and allowed to give to their best in an atmosphere of liberty. This is the true safeguard of cultural identity.

Sir, considering the importance of T.V. In a country like ours with half the illiterates of the world, a proper perspective in relation to our media policy is very relevant. We know that of the media, television does occupy a very important position. We have nearly 400 million illiterates in our country. Even those who are literate are not well literate. I may rather say that according to some estimates, only 5 per cent of the population in our country reads newspapers. In such a situation, the visual medium is having a very important place. Another point in relation to this which I would like to bring to the notice of the House is that with

the so-called new education policy, the Government is abandoning the responsibility of eradicating illiteracy on the one hand and on the other the Government is abandoning the responsibility of implementing the constitutional stipulation that all those who are below the age of 14 at least will be given compulsory primary education. The Government is trying to abandon this responsibility. And interestingly, by starting new TV transmitting centres, the Government is trying to create an illusion that TV can replace schools. Instead of starting new schools, instead of taking the responsibility of opening new schools, the Government is trying to make people believe that TV can replace teachers, schools and things like that. But what is actually happening? Now, the programmes that are being telecast through the TV are causing a tremendous danger to the very cultural traditions of our country. The stuff that is being brought out through the television does not have anything to do with the realities of our country. We have been told, and this is a famous statement by Karl Marx that religion is becoming an opium for the people. But if you go by the kind of programmes that are coming out of the TV, at least for middle-class people, now the TV is also becoming an opium. The famous term used for the television is 'idiot box'. But I would like to say that rather than an idiot box, it is becoming an 'idle box'. Television not only tries to keep people physically idle, but it is trying to make people mentally also idle because the problems that the people face in their every day life are not being discussed on the TV. And most of the programmes that are coming out through the TV prime time have nothing to do with the realities of the country. On the other hand, if at all some meaningful programmes are being brought out, there have been efforts to withdraw such programmes. And my case in point is the famous 'Newsline' brought out by the eminent journalist, Mr. M. J. Akbar. The justification given to withdraw the 'Newsline' was that already you have news bulletins in Hindi and English and why should there be a programme presented by

an individual. Bui I would like to inform the hon. Minister who is present here that the very purpose of the 'Newslines' was something different. Whereas every day the Information and Broadcasting Ministry is getting 30 minutes to propagate their own news, to project whomsoever they want, whenever they want and when they are getting 30 minutes every day, this 'Newslines' was having only 25 minutes twice in a month. This was the reality. I don't have any brief for Mr. M. J. Akbar, but there are some programmes brought out in the 'Newslines' to which one may refer. Though I am not a regular viewer of television, I am told and I happen to see, specially one item on show in some suburbs of Delhi, perhaps, in Seemapuri, young women are brought from the villages of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and how they are being exploited for ulterior purposes. This was shown in one of his pieces and a local policeman was also standing there. So, the crew was asking the local people as to what is happening? &f. The local people said that the police people are in collusion with the criminals. Then immediately the camera turns to the Delhi police boss and he says, "there may be such instances; there may be a few blacksnep in the police but we cannot generalise this kind of a thing." I do not want to go into the details of that programme. But some realities of our country were sought to be brought out through the media. Whenever such meaningful programmes come, external intervention comes, intervention from higher-ups comes. I do not want to say what happened to the screening of the 'New Delhi Times' and what happened to the screening of 'Rajiv's India'. What happened to 'Rajiv's India' explains what is really happening in Rajiv's India in relation to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, and freedom of media. Since there is not much time, I do not want to go into the details of the problems of the workers in the various units under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting like the All India Radio and Doordarshan. The people employed in those organisations have so many problems and grievances and I hope that they

will be seriously taken up by the Ministry. At the same time, I am requesting that a Parliamentary Committee may also be constituted to see that their grievances are taken up seriously and to look into them. (Time Bell rings).

Now, Sir, before concluding my speech I want to make three more points. Firstly, I want to say that there should be a more balanced presentation of sports programmes on television. At the present moment there is an imbalance or over-exposure given to cricket at the cost of athletics and other sports. We are prepared to cover any cricket match even if it held on the moon or some other planet. But I want to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister a specific instance when the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru International Gold Cup Football Tournament was held in Trivandrum, excepting the finals no other important match was directly telecast or even later on telecast. Now, one of the most important sports events in the world is being held in Jakarta, i.e., the Thomas Cup Badminton Tournament. Nothing has been done to cover that. Just like that so many instances can be given. A more balanced approach should be there, of course, not at the cost of cricket, but the exposure to cricket should not be at the cost of other sports.

Then I come to arts. Radio and television can play a very important role for unifying our country. Again, I do not want to go into the details of all that. But a proper serious approach is not being followed in relation to this here. Here I want to make only two points. The first point is that in the presentation of various arts, for example, in classical music, in Indian classical music, we have two systems, namely, the Hindustani and the Carnatic. A balanced presentation with sufficient time for both systems of music should be given and more emphasis on classical art form should be given on both radio and television. Time presently given for classical art forms is hardly sufficient specially in T.V. This should be very seriously looked into by the hon. Minister.

[Shri M. A. Baby]

A lother aspect that I would like to mention is the obscurantist religious programmes that are being covered by our media in an indiscriminate manner. In this connection, I will narrate to you an incident. I happened to see a programme of ihe Trivandrum television. In the guise of showing a festival in a temple, and odd barbaric practice of holding a child by a man by means of a hook inserted into his flesh which is attached to a pole and then dangling him before the crowd so as to ward off the spirits, was telecast. This is a kind of religious practice in some parts, of Kerala, a very very unfortunate and obscurantist practice, especially practised on children so that the ill-effects on them could be warded off. (*Time Bell rings*). Such programmes have been shown in full detai¹. And, Sir, we have heard today somr unfo.tunate happenings in Punjab. The approach of our Government towards religion is not on right lines. The media has to play a very important role in keeping the minds of people on secular lines. What 'he media is c'omg today is to divide its time for various religions. If fifty minutes are given to a Hindu temple festival, than proportionate time is being given for Christian, Muslim and Sikh festivals also. This is not a secular approach. Religion is a personal affair. Everybody can practise it. But Mass media should not be utilised to propagate the fanatical religious obscurantist ideas. It is a very important point which should be taken note of especially in the background of the unfortunate happenings in States like Punjab and elsewhere.

Sir, I hope that the points raised by me will be seriously taken note of by the Ministry and a more scientific secular, democratic approach will be evolved by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting so that the Ministry can function m a better manner.

With these words, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you once again and I conclude.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, thank you

Cor permitting me to speak on the perfor- ii., i. iii. oimution and Broadcast- ing Ministry today. Before I begin to say something about the performance of this Ministry, I would like to say a few words about our Minister who is sitting here. He is the only Minister wtio used to sit whenever we discussed about any Ministry. I see his smiling face; I do not know why he is so tired today.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (.West Bengal): He looks tired.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO (Iammu and Kashmir): He is always smiling.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: Perhaps he is tired of hearing my Communist friends only because they will never talk truths.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: What is this?

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: That is my opinion.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO: He keeps his fingers crossed.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: AU least Mohanan will support Mohanarangam.

As far as my feeling is concerned, our country cannot be compared with oraer countries for the simple reason that wa have unity in diversity. We have 751 crores of people in our country. Bach and every State of our country can be com- pared with Eurpean nations. We have 4 or 5 crores of people in each and every State. For example, in Tamil Nadu, wo have five crores and my Andhra friends have exceeded that; they have about seven crores. Likewise, each and every State is having more than 2 crores or 3 crores or 4 or 5 crores of population. So, they have, to consider this country not as a single country, not as a single nation but ft is the United States of India. What is ap- plicable for a single nation with regard to information and broadcasting prin- ciples,, will not apply to

our country, because we have got different types of people, having different conventions, different practices, habits, even though we have a particular culture. What is applicable to a particular State will never be applicable to another State. What is applicable to my State cannot be applicable to U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh etc., because we differ—though we do not differ in culture, we differ in taste, in language and in other things. That is why, as I said at the beginning, we have got a very dynamic Minister. Even though he is so tired today, he is smiling at me. I have got the highest regard for him, and I say all these preliminaries because I am going to speak something about his Ministry.

After 1967, different States are ruled by different parties. Before 1967, it was ruled by one party. Almost all the Chief Ministers of different States were under the control of the Prime Minister and, therefore, whatever the Prime Minister would say, they had to agree and they had to apply his motivation, rules and regulations. But here, my State is ruled by a different party; his State is ruled by a different party again; likewise, more than half a dozen States are ruled by different parties. And we have different principles. So, what was applicable before 1967, cannot hold good today. Therefore, there should be some amendment. For example, at Kodaikanal, we have a 10 KV relay station. They relay the programme from Delhi which we get here; we do not get the programmes from Madras because we do not have microwave line. Even though we have brought it to the notice of the Minister on a number of occasions and demanded that a micro-wave line be introduced to enable us to get TV programmes from Madras, they have not been able to rectify it. We have only 10 KV relay station—or some such technical expression that we are told—at Kodaikanal where we get programmes relayed from Delhi. Sir, only 12 per cent of the total population of this country can understand English. Unfortunately, we come from different parts of the country from somewhere about two thou-

sand miles away from the capital. Especially, in Kodaikanal, 95 per cent of the people are tribal people. They do not know English. Whenever I say anything against Hindi, particularly the Ministers and also the other persons belonging to Hindi-speaking areas think that I am speaking against it. But today I am going to speak against English also. You relay programmes only in Hindi and English and Kodaikanal gets these programmes relayed from Delhi. They do not get programmes from Madras—Tamil programmes; at least they know Tamil and they can see the programmes and understand them, and enjoy them. But they cannot understand what is telecast from Delhi because they can understand neither English nor Hindi. Therefore, what is the use of having the 10 KV station at Kodaikanal? The programmes relayed from Delhi are either in English or in Hindi. Of course, we have to bear with it now I and you cannot do anything because there is no microwave link at present.

Now, Sir, you are talking as if we are going to see the television all the 24 hours, as if we have no other work. We see the television just for two hours or so, between 7 P.M. and 10 or 10.30 P.M., I have been a Member of Parliament for the past ten years, either of the Lok Sabha or of this House. Anyhow, I have managed to be in Parliament for the past ten years.

SHRI GHULAM ROSOOL MATTO:
You will continue.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: That I will tell you after June. Sir, I am not in a position to understand even a single word in Hindi, except one or two words like 'gadi' or 'chawal'. When this is the position of an educated person in Delhi, you can imagine the position of the five crores of people in Tamil Nadu, 55 lakhs of whom are in Madras city. That is why, in Tamil Nadu, by 9 P.M. when somebody announces something in Hindi, people shut down the television because they cannot understand a word of what follows.

[Shri R. Mohanaragam]

That is why, I started by saying that our country cannot be considered as a nation. After all, what is a nation? Nation is a territory consisting of different types of people, belonging to different regions, having different conventions, customs, practices and habits but having an underlying uniform culture. When this is the position, you are asking us to see programmes on the television, in a particular language, when there are fifteen national languages in the country. If you ask us to see the programmes telecast only in Hindi, do you mean to say that people will sit continuously before the television for two-three hours, without understanding the language? Why don't you introduce all the fifteen languages in a cycle so that people speaking different languages will be able to see programmes in their own language at least once or twice a month? Why do you impose a particular language and ask us, compel us, to sit before the television and see the programmes? This is one point. Sir, a very unhappy and unpleasant thing happened; some of the friends were saying. When a Hindi programme was being shown on T.V. students from a nearby school came and shut down the television and the television burst. They did this, this happened, because the programme was in Hindi, for the simple reason they could not understand the language. That is why, I suggest that the Kodaikanal station should be linked with Madras, so that the people will be able to see programmes for two hours or so because the programmes will be in Tamil at that time. We have already sent 5,000 television sets to this area. Recently, it has been decided to send another 5,000 colour television sets to Kodaikanal and the nearby rural areas.

In his connection. Sir, we have been demanding that we should be given a second channel. Madras is the gateway of South India, even though my friend, Mr. Upendra, may object to it after taking more funds from the Centre so that

Hyderabad can prosper. If anything is to be sent to foreign countries from the Southern States, it has to go only through the Madras Port. Madras is one of the four major metropolitan cities. We have been demanding that we should be given a second channel. If you give us a second channel, we can use it for telecasting programmes in Tamil, specially after 9 P.M. so that the people can switch off the other channel and see this channel.

Tamil Nadu is what is called the tip of the nation. After that, is Sri Lanka. Just fifteen days back, there was a report that the Sri Lankan Government is propagating false news about the Indian Government and about the attitude of the Indian Government towards the Sri Lankan Government. If we have a station in Rameswaram or Kanyakumari, we can use it for countering the propaganda of the Sri Lankan Government, for giving a fitting answer to the false propaganda and we can even make the Sri Lankans see our television programmes. The distance between Sri Lanka and the southernmost tip of the country is only 20—30 miles and at some places, it is only 18—20 miles. We should set up a station at or near Rameswaram or Kanyakumari at least from the point of view of safety and security of the country. We have been asking for more colour OB vans. I, as a Member of Parliament, have been demanding it for the past more than seven years. The Ministers—of course, they have been changing—used to say that within a year we will get these OB vans. I do not know when we are going to get O.B. vans, where exactly the matter stands. The Minister had earlier said that within two to three months we will get the vans, but so far Madras and Calcutta have not got the vans. Delhi and Bombay have got them but not Madras and Calcutta. I am sneaking for Calcutta also. I hope our Minister will take necessary steps to give O.B. vans to Madras and Calcutta.

Sir, the main purpose of TV is to look to the integrity of the nation. Whenever I used to go in for XT films _____

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO:
 Blue films.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: What? I
 am talking of 'U*' films.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO:
 Blue films.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: If at all
 you ask a question from a person who is
 hungry, what is four plus four, he will say,
 eight puris. He will say that because of the
 mentality that he is having. And when I am
 talking of 'U*' films, he is talking of blue
 films. Whenever I go to see 'U' films along
 with my children, trailers of 'A' films are
 shown and we have to shut their eyes. Even
 though they know everything, still we have to
 shut their eyes. So, kindly see that trailers of
 'A' films are not shown whenever 'U' films are
 going on in a theatre.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO: I
 still feel you said blue films.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: AB right.
 We are all experienced men and also I am
 coming from a State where you have
 somewhat noticed AIDS and aU those things.

Sir, you hare got a wonderful department
 called Censor Board. May be, you can say
 that it is transferred to the Human Resource
 Development Ministry. Now there is an
 officer at Madras and there is a
 misunderstanding between that officer and the
 producers of Tamil Nadu there.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE
 MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND
 BROADCASTING (SHRI V. N. GAD-GIL): I
 do not want to interrupt, but in the recent
 reorganisation of Ministries, when the
 Ministry of Human Resource Development
 was created, Censor Board has been
 transferred to the Department of Culture. You
 can speak on it but I will not be able to deal
 with it. I will only convey your view* to that
 department.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: Even
 though it has been transferred to that Ministry,
 as I said, until and unless I knew the subject, I
 would not speak about it. Have you ever seen
 me talking about any subject, about any
 technical subject about which I knew nothing?

Sir, this misunderstanding is going oa from
 the time this department was controlled by
 you and now it has been transferred to Mr.
 Narasimha Rao. Tamil Nadu is considered to
 be India's Hollywood. We take more than 250
 pictures every year. We are getting crores and
 crores of rupees as entertainment tax. But this
 gent'eman, even if a hero touches the heroine,
 just brings his scissors and cuts it. So, we
 should not imagine impossibilities. We are not
 in the period of Adam, we are in the second
 part of the 20th century where Human
 Resource Developoment Ministry has come
 forward to introduce Sexology as one of the
 subjects in schools. When this is the case, why
 a hero touching a lady should be taken as a
 crime? So, such things should not happen.

There is one more point. Sir. whenever
 Prime Minister of any other important VIPs
 came to Madras, we the MP* and other VIPs
 will go and receive them. Ministers will also
 go and receive them. But the Madras
 Doordarshan completely wipes off that part of
 the scene where actually the MPs or the State
 Minister* showed their face.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA
 (Andhra Pradesh): So that you do not come
 into the fame.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: That may
 be the reason, that may be due to the size of
 the person, but actually they do not give that
 much importance. The TV media is one of the
 important media. That is why Prime Minister
 used to select important persons to be the
 Minister for Information and Broadcasting.
 This policy was adopted by the Janata
 administration, but States should also be
 given

[Shri R. Mohanaragam]
importance. Once, all the Chief Ministers Were under the control of th© Prime Minister, but now that is not the position. My Chief Minister is the leader of my party and he is not under the control of the Prime Minister. Likewise his Chief Minister is also not under the control of the Prime Minister. When Tamil Nadu was ruled by Congress Chief Minister, he was under the control of the Prime Minister. Anyhow he has to obey his orders. Now Sir, the importance of TV gives for the Prime Minister or for other VIPs from the Centre, that much importance is not given to the State Chief Minister. Kindly see to it that hereafter that much importance is given to the State Chief Minister who is the custodian of a State where more than 5 to 6 crores of people are living. That is number one. Number two, each and every M.P. is representing more than 8 to 9 lakhs of people. My Congress friends will excuse me if I say that whenever we M.Ps, are going and attending a particular function, they give preference to Congress M.P* alone.

SHRI THANGABALU (Tamil Nadu): I am sorry to interrupt you. They aro also not given proper importance.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: If that is the case, I wonder whether all the 39 M.Ps, from Tamil Nadu in the Lok Sabha and 19 in the Rajya Sabha.. (Interruptions).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. KAUSHIK): Let him complete. Please don't interrupt him.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: You have to see that M.Ps, are given due importance. They think they are answerable to the Central Government employees, Central Government officers and Central Ministers and they are not answerable to the State Government officers and State Ministers and M.Ps, belonging to that particular State. Kindly see that due importance is given to the M.Ps.

Sir, All India Radio people are excellent people. Proceedings are going on in

the Madras State Legislative Assembly. Here also proceedings are going on. AIR people are there; TV people are there. They report what has happened today in Parliament in "Today in Parliament". AU these things they relay. Over the AIR when they say that a particular person 'A' has spoken on this and the next day wa tell them that this was not spoken by 'A' but by 'B', they say: "Sorry, Sir, we wilt correct it". Not on one occasion but about half a dozen times it has so hap pened that they have changed the name of the person. And the reason they give is, "Sir, we are sending some per sons who are not permanent employees of AIR, they are only temporary emp loyees and we are not responsible for that" . I want to know exactly one thing: even if a casual labourer is employed by an institution, they take the responsibility for his mistakes. Why should AIR not take the responsibility even though the mistake is committed by part-time or tem porary employees? Why should they talk like that that they have not sufficient experience? Is that correct? If I speak anything, instead of say ing "Mohanaragam spoke on a certain subjects", they say "Mr. Upendra spoke on this" how will I feel? Next day my leader will ask: me, "Mr. Mohanaragam, why have yoa talked like that?" This should not happen. If both of them belong to the same party, it is not that harmful. But when they belong to different parties -----

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: You are "loyal" Opposition.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: I am not opposing for opposition sake. Wai have got certain principles and convictions and I speak out of conviction and on principles. My leader has taught us duty, discipline and decency. All these threw canons of democracy we are following foi* ihe past so many years.

Generally I would like to tell you ons thing. TV in Madras is one of the main media during elections and on some other

occasions. So you please intimate to them that they should treat equally all the persons and there should not be any discrimination because of political affiliation, because of the party to which they belong or because of the institution to which they belong.

Number two, have you ever just taken care to see on what basis they recruit the employees. Are they recruited through employment exchanges? Or are they recruited through a certain agency? Have you ever seen only a particular group of people occupying the whole of the TV station. I do not want to mention which group is there but you just check up the statistics. And they even go to the extent of changing the language also. If a person reads news, that will not be textual Tamil as far as Tamil is concerned. If I speak, will speak perfect Tamil. But they speak in such a way that even a Tamilian would not understand what exactly they speak. They do not select the candidates according to merit but on the basis of relationship and they are selecting their kith and kin. So, kindly see about recruitment also.

Number two is about selection of pictures. You are showing pictures on the TV and you are spending lakhs and lakhs of rupees on that. I think you are spending every year a crore of rupees for a hundred pictures. On what basis are you electing these pictures? Are you seeing the actors or the real merit of the films or certain other things that they follow at the time of producing the pictures? All these things you will have to consider. I don't think they consider all these things. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, all these things have to be kept in mind. Finally, as I said in the beginning, you will have to consider what I said about AIR.

Now about newspapers. Advertisements are freely given to the major newspapers and they always get the advertisements. But the small and regional language newspapers do not get advertisements

unless and until they have recommendation. Therefore, kindly see to the interests of the small newspapers which have to be protected. The newspapers which are published in regional languages also should be protected. What is the use of unnecessarily giving advertisements to major newspapers which have got circulation of lakhs and lakhs of issues? So, you will have to give importance to them and provide facilities for the spread of regional language newspapers.

With these words, Sir, I conclude. Thank you.

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH (Gujarat) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, it has been the objective of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and, in wider terms, the objective of the media, particularly TV and radio, to inform, educate and entertain with a view to creating awareness among the people about the Nation's all round development and involving people's participation in the implementation of the policies, plans and programmes of the Government.

Sir, the electronic media which has gained significance in the last decade has been trying hard to keep pace with the development of the Nation and the development which is going on in the world and simultaneously keeping up with the aspirations and expectations of the people. Television in India has completed its silver jubilee and in the last three years it has expanded on an unprecedented scale both in terms of area and audience. The use of satellites and a national network of TV stations have been established all over the country in the last two to three years. This sensational development has a profound effect on our people and particularly on their lifestyles. A clear perspective on software planning and production is therefore urgently needed. How far the Government has accomplished this task, I think only the honourable Minister will be able to answer.

The Government has set up a working group on software for Doordarshan with Prof. P. C. Joshi as its Chairman. This

[Shri Raoof Valiullah]

group has already submitted its report. A Media Advisory Committee headed by Shri G. Parthasarathy has gone into the report in detail and already its findings are before the Ministry. I am surprised why the same report and the recommendations of the Media Advisory Committee have again been sent to Doordarshan and AIR for their comments. I have conveyed my misgivings on this issue several times and I am yet to satisfy myself. If their views have been given before the two committees, then there is no need to subject the report of the Joshi Committee and the recommendations of the Media Advisory Committee again to the scrutiny of Doordarshan and AIR. Even if it is so, how long will these two organizations take to form their own conclusions so that the PC Joshi Committee report can be implemented as early as possible? Sir, it has been claimed that nearly 66.5 per cent of the country's population has been provided with TV service, and by the end of the Sixth Plan the expected coverage, according to the hon. Minister was 70 per cent. I still wonder whether this is only as far as the transmission area is concerned or actual viewing. Sir, the number of IV sets in the country are so less and concentrated in major cities and towns and electricity in the villages so scarce that it is impossible to achieve this target in our country. Sir, I would like to know from the Minister what actually is meant by 70 per cent coverage.

Sir, the Seventh Plan envisages a Plan outlay of Rs. 700 crores for the Doordarshan, and if replacement and modernisation of equipment is to be done in nearly 29 programme production centres as enunciated in the report of the Ministry, the entire outlay will not be sufficient only for this item. Creation of more facilities, augmentation of the existing facilities, expansion of the transmitter network and the second channel service will inevitably require more funds. Sir, I would like the Minister to throw some light on what will be spent on each of these items. If all the Plan outlay is to be spent on hardware, what will be the share of the software?

Sir, the Ministry has also thought of providing a three-tier TV service in our country—primary, national and local. I would like to know whether it has got the necessary infrastructure for the same. I understand that community-viewing TV sets have been provided by the Government of India in six States. The number of such sets is 2,000 very high frequency (VHF) sets and 2,000 direct reception (DR) sets, and it is estimated that under the Seventh Plan this number will reach 11,000. But my question to the Minister is whether only 11,000 sets in lakhs of villages in the country would be an answer to the growing needs and the growing curiosity of the people in the country. Sir, I also fail to understand why whereas the AIR has been allotted Rs. 700 crores for the Seventh Five-Year Plan, the Doordarshan has been treated in the same way. If you claim 70 per cent coverage by TV and if you want to expand it, the Doordarshan certainly deserves more funds.

Sir, coming to the structure of the Doordarshan and the AIR, I would like to suggest that in order to give functional autonomy to these two important electronic media of the I&B Ministry some kind of a cultural commission should be established at the national level just as the Planning Commission and that experts in the field of mass communication should be appointed on the commission to supervise these organisations and to chalk out the role of the Doordarshan in this country. Sir, this would give credibility to the Doordarshan, and the serious lapses which have been occurring recently in the Doordarshan could be avoided.

Sir, we know the controversy regarding the postponement or rather cancellation of telecast of the film "Rajiv's India" and the omission of the news item about the disappearance of Charles Sobhraj from the Delhi Tihar Jail. These are but a few examples of the confusion prevailing in the present set-up in the Doordarshan.

Sir, the other things which the people of this country look forward to as far as the relevance of the Doordarshan is concerned are importance of local production and area-specific programmes

to meet the needs of the people and the educational and developmental roles the television can play in a country like India. It has also been observed that TV should genuinely serve the interests of a diverse audience and specialised sectors like women, children, students and farmers, who need to be specially cared for in this country.

This brings us to the important question of the quantum and role of the sponsored programmes, the commercialised and imported programmes. I understand we have been given an assurance by the hon. Minister—I am very glad about it—that 11 per cent time is consumed by the sponsored programmes. Though I am not against good imported programmes like those on wild life, serials on nature and films on space programmes and scientific advancement, I strongly feel that mediocre and urbanised sponsored programmes serve very little purpose to the vast rural audience in this country. I also feel that the value system that we are preaching on TV through sponsored programmes has an adverse effect on not only the rural masses, but even on the lower and middle class people also in our major cities.

Here comes the role and place of video in relation to television and whether video law is complementary or antagonistic to TV is also to be decided now by the Ministry once and for all. It has been observed that video has come to stay in the cities where TV viewing is the maximum.

The impact of advertising on the minds of the TV viewers have also been studied scientifically because the utility of advertisements is sometimes overdone. I had brought this to the attention of the hon. Minister many times that some advertisements are perverse and tend to suggest things which are not at all feasible or physically possible. Advertisements, therefore, should be positive and not only promotional.

I would also like to know the fate of the two committees, one for screening the

sponsored programmes and another for feature films, which were to be announced by the Ministry. The decision was taken nearly six months ago, but the personnel on the Committee have still not been appointed. In the absence of these Committees the clearance of the sponsored programmes is being done by three officials of the Doordarshan. Obviously there are a lot of complaints regarding clearance and rejection of the sponsored programmes and favouritism and things like that.

The issue of video piracy is also important because video piracy is on the increase. The Cinematograph Act, 1952 was amended in 1984, but the enforcement of the law is left to the State Government. Secondly, the Central Board of Film Certification has also been taken out of the I & B Ministry and placed under the Human Resource Development Ministry. Hence the infringement of Copyright though cognizable and non-bailable, is not properly dealt with due to multiplicity of authorities. The Ministry may throw some light as to how local authorities have been taking appropriate action for violation of this Act.

One of the most important issues that I have raised in the Consultative Committee of this Ministry is the formation and declaration of the national media policy. In this connection I am thankful to the hon. Minister that while he was the Minister of Communications, he had evolved and given thought to the National Communications Policy, which, *inter-alia* would include the media policy also. I make a further appeal to the Minister that serious thought should be given to this issue and a national policy on media be announced as early as possible.

Sir, I also request the Honourable Minister to formulate the newsprint allocation policy for the year 1985-86 and announce the policy so that the newspapers get the facilities which are to be expanded by the Government.