

various obstacles and difficulties that have arisen in the economic growth of the country and other aspects, for instance, education, and this is a very welcome development because I think unless we all agree on these basic factors, it will be very difficult to really use the instrument of education for population control in an effective way which is what we want to do and I shall explain and elaborate as to how exactly we want to deal with it in terms of the curriculum and in terms of administrative linkages that we are trying to establish between education on the one hand, and health and family welfare department, on the other. I will go into all these things on the next day. But the basic point is well taken.

Shrimati Pratibhaji, I think, mentioned a certain figure, near about a thousand crores, which this country will reach by the year 2000. Let us hope we can reduce that figure. But whatever we do, the figure is going to be very high and the figure is going to be about 900 crores as far as I can see and I will mention only one point here and that is, Sir, that there was a time when some people argued against the family planning and mentioned China as an example, where family planning was not followed. I have followed the course of events in China fairly closely and I know that years ago they changed their policy and they went over to family planning and, in fact, they adopted the slogan, more or less, with a slight change, which Hukmedoji mentioned namely, one-child family norm; that is 5.00 P.M. the norm they have adopted in China. So, China has changed its policy because of pressure of population and we are the second largest country, we have to follow suit; there is really no choice.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. RAMAKRISHNAN): I think you can continue your detailed intervention on the 9th of August when we will

continue with this, and after that, the mover of the Resolution will reply.

Now, hon. Minister of Finance wants to lay something.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE— contd.

Notification of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): Sir, with your permission, I lay on the Table a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) Notification G.S.R. No. 607 (E), dated the 26th July, 1985, issued under rule 8(1) of the Central Excise Rules, 1944 exempting Lean Gas obtained from natural gas from whole of the duty of excise leviable thereon when intended for use as (i) feedstock in the manufacture of fertilizers and (ii) fuel for the generation of electrical energy by specified electrical undertakings, together with an explanatory memorandum thereon. Placed in Library. See No. LT-1190/85].

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Near-breakdown of telephone system in major cities due to rains—contd.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. RAMAKRISHNAN): Now we come to calling attention. Shri Sukomal Sen.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Mr. Vice-Chairman, before lunch break I was referring to import of foreign technology for our telephone system. I have no objection as such to import of foreign technology if it is absolutely necessary. But in regard to telephones, the technology is functioning very well in Japan and in France from where we are importing this technology. We

[Shri Sukomal Sen]

know whether in Japan or in France or in Germany or any other western country this particular technology is functioning effectively in their particular climatic and environmental conditions but in India we have a different climatic and environmental situation. Our soil condition is different. There are different factors which have no connection with the factors available in those western countries. So the point is if we bring this technology in toto our country and apply it in toto, without recognising the special distinction of our situation as I said about climatic and environmental conditions and soil condition and other factors—will it be possible that the same technology should function as effectively here as it is functioning in those countries from where we import this technology? My personal experience is you have already installed digital technology in India in various sectors but its functioning is totally disappointing here. On the other hand, the same digital technology, whether in Japan or in France, is functioning exceedingly well. Why is it so? I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether his attention has been drawn to this aspect. Why is the technology which is functioning very well in those countries from where we have imported it, failing disappointingly when we install it in our own country? As I pointed out, the same thing happened in the case of cross-bar exchanges. Same thing is repeated in regard to electronic and digital exchanges also. That is why, I want to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that if we want to just import the technology and implant it in our country without taking into account the special features or the different factors obtaining in our country, I do not think this technology is going to be very effective here or it will function well in our country. In the case of cross-bar technology, when you have found that the technology which has been imported into India has not been func-

tioning well, I would like to know whether any enquiry has been made into it. What has led the department to import such technology which is not functioning effectively in our country? Why it is happening? Who is responsible for it? Have you fixed any responsibility for this? Have you ever reviewed the performance? I do not think anything has been done in this respect. I will be glad if the hon. Minister clarifies the point.

Then, Sir, about the automation of these exchanges. A number of staff will be rendered surplus after the automation is introduced. On the one hand, you are importing this technology without taking into consideration the local factors. On the other what are you going to do with the staff which will be rendered surplus because of the automation of these exchanges?

Next point is, these new exchanges, so far as my knowledge goes, they can take care of the defects and faults which may develop inside the exchanges. But in regard to underground cables, can this new technology, this imported technology, take care of them? So far as my knowledge goes, it cannot do so. The Minister may kindly clarify this.

Then, Sir, many telephone are remaining dead for months together. I do not know whether it is fifty per cent or sixty per cent. A large percentage of telephones in our country whether it is in the city of Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi or Madras or anywhere else, need replacement. The cable system and the entire apparatus need replacement. I would like to know what the Government has done for replacement of the outmoded cables and other apparatus. We have been hearing that something is going to be done about it. But nothing has been done as yet. (*Time bell rings*) I will be concluding in a few minutes.

When the telephone system is in shambles, the Government has taken steps to bifurcate the department. I do not know how far this bifurcation will bring about an improvement in the functioning. Corporations are being formed. The argument is being given that if corporations take over the telephone system—in Bombay and Delhi, it has already been decided, it will help in effective functioning of the telephone system. When under the Government control itself, they have failed, how can the functioning be improved merely by forming corporations? The argument advanced is that corporations can take enough finance from banks and other institutions. Cannot the Government take finance from banks and other institutions? If necessary, rules can be changed. But instead of keeping it under the control of the Government, corporations are being formed. I am afraid, this will only worsen the situation further. If the corporations take over the entire telephone system in our country, one by one, I am afraid, we will be facing a disaster in the working of our telephone system.

Sir, this has been discussed many times. There have been newspaper reports that the Government is considering about it. On the one hand, you are forming corporations. On the other, the telephone system remains dead. The point is, when the telephone remains dead for months together and there is no possibility of getting it repaired or restoring its functioning. Why will the consumer pay rent for the dead telephone? They are supposed to pay for a working telephone and not for the telephone which remains dead for months together. I would like to know whether the Government is prepared to consider the suggestion that for the period the telephone remains dead the consumer will be exempted from paying its rent. Otherwise, why should the consumer suffer for the fault of the department?

These are some relevant points which I would like the hon. Minister

to clarify. And I personally appeal to the hon. Minister that he should not give just a formal reply as is very often given on the floor of the Parliament. That formal reply may satisfy somebody's ego, what we are discussing may be talked out, but it will not satisfy the consumers. The distress of the consumer will not be mitigated if only these things are talked out formally. I would like the hon. Minister to take a sympathetic view of the difficulties that the consumers are facing in this country.

श्री हुक्मदेव नारायण यादव (बिहार) :

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह विभाग एक ऐसा विभाग है जिसके ऊपर जितने प्रश्न किए जायें वे सब थोड़े हैं और हम लोग तो हम ही हैं। मंत्री जी को कभी-कभी यह कह देना पड़ता होगा कि टेलीफोन की गड़बड़ी के कारण समय पर सूचना दे ही नहीं पाए। उनको भी कभी-कभी यह कहना ही पड़ता होगा और व खुद इसके भुक्त-भोगी हैं। वर्षा के कारण कहीं गड़बड़ी हो तो ठीक है लेकिन यहां तो बिना वर्षा के गड़बड़ी रहती है और उससे भी ज्यादा रहती है। बरसात में गड़बड़ी आ गई तो आ गई लेकिन यह तो बिना बरसात के है? दूसरों की बात तो दूर जाने दीजिए मैं ही चार दिन से कह रहा हूं। 178 को किया, 198 को किया, डी० ई० टी० को किया, उन्होंने कहा कि तुरन्त देख रहा हूं। नहीं हुआ तो फिर एरिया मैनेजर को कहा। उन्होंने भी कहा कि देख रहा हूं। फिर भी कुछ नहीं हुआ। अब उससे ऊपर किसको कहें? अब कहीं गड़बड़ी हो तो एक सर्कुलर निकाल लिया कि उपभोक्ताओं की सुविधा के लिए मंत्री जी के निवास पर भी एक शिकायत सुनने वाला स्टाफ बैठा दिया गया है, तब आपके यहां सीधा रिकार्ड होगा कि कहां-कहां कौन शिकायत कर रहा है, नहीं तो शिकायतों की कोई गिनती नहीं है। एक प्लग प्वायंट खराब हो गया। चार दिन तक प्रयास करते रहे, 178, 198 को किया है, डी० ई० टी० तक प्रयास किया, लेकिन वह ठीक नहीं हुआ। अब आपने जो इस उत्तर में कहा है कि जीवनोपयोगी संस्थाओं द्वारा किए गए खुदाई कार्यों के कारण क्षतिग्रस्त होते हैं, तो ज्यों-ज्यों शहरों का

[श्री हुक्मदेव नारायण गांधव]

विस्तार हो रहा है, क्या टेलीफोन डिपार्टमेंट इस बात से अवगत है या नहीं कि शहरों के विस्तार के मुताबिक दीर्घकालीन योजना हो, बड़े शहरों के लिये आपके पास कोई योजना बताई हुई है या नहीं इन शहरों का इतना विस्तार होगा कि तो इतने के लिए इतनी टेलीफोन लाईन देनी पड़ेगी, उसके लिए इतनी तार बिछानी पड़ेगी, यह व्यवस्था करनी पड़ेगी ? इसके लिए अत्याधुनिक वैज्ञानिक और दीर्घकालीन कोई योजना प्रारूप क्या आपके पास है या नहीं है ? या फिर यह टूट फूट ऐसे ही होती रहेगी ? दूसरी बात आपने इसमें यह कहा है कि बम्बई में जून 1985 के अंत तक भारी वर्षा हुई जिसके कारण पानी जमा हो गया। बम्बई में एक विल्डिंग है, जिसमें तीन एक्सचेंज थे, पानी का स्तर लगभग पांच फुट तक पहुंच गया था। क्या बंबई में इससे पहले कभी इतनी वर्षा हुई है या नहीं ? या फिर सब से अधिक वर्षा इसी साल हुई है। इस साल के रिकार्ड ने पिछले रिकार्ड को ब्रेक कर दिया। तो जहां एक्सचेंज का मकान बनाया गया था यहाँ इस बात की क्या जांच की गई थी कि जब वर्षा होगी तो इसमें पानी का जलस्तर कहां तक जा सकता है ? अगर आपके इंजीनियर्स ने, मकान बनाने वालों ने इस तरह की प्लानिंग नहीं की तो इसके लिए सारे इंजीनियर्स दोषी हैं जिन्होंने इस तरह का गवन एस्टीमेट नक्शा आदि बनाया, जिसको कि कोई जानकारी नहीं थी, और जिन्होंने पहले पूरी जांच-पड़ताल नहीं की और गड्ढे में जाकर यह एक्सचेंज बना दिया। जहां पर कि पांच फुट तक पानी चला आया। वहां इतना पानी कैसे चला आया कि वह एक्सचेंज पानी में डूब गया ? तो इतना पानी चला आया। इसका मतलब वहां गड्ढा बना दिया। यहां इससे पहले इससे अधिक पानी कभी हुआ था या नहीं या बम्बई में पहले अकाल था, सूखाड़ था, जो इस बार पानी पांच फुट चला आया या कहीं से मण्डू से नहर निकल आयी, जिससे पांच फुट पानी बंबई में चला आया। यह तो आपके इंजीनियर मकान बनाने में अक्षम थे, योजना जिन्होंने बनाई, उनमें योग्यता नहीं थी और गलत आधार पर मकान बनाया

एक्सचेंज बनाया। मैं समझता हूं कि उन्होंने यह सबसे बड़ी गड़बड़ी की है और इसके लिए वे दोषी हैं। इसका आप जवाब दीजिए कि इन सब बिन्दुओं पर जांच-पड़ताल हुई या नहीं हुई ?

फिर आपने कहा कि दिल्ली में अभी हाल ही में काफी वर्षा हुई, जिसके कारण यह गड़बड़ी हुई। इससे पहले जैसा मैंने आपको बताया था, यह गड़बड़ी हुई थी, यह गड़बड़ी अधिक वर्षा के कारण हुई थी। फिर आप कहते हैं कि—1985 की वर्षा ऋतु के दौरान प्रमुख शहरों में खराबियों की संख्या कुल मिलाकर पिछले वर्षों की अपेक्षा कम रही है। सरकार का यह सबसे बड़ा हथियार है कि जब कोई बात हो, तो पहले कहते हैं कि पिछले साल से कम है। अब आपने बताया पिछले साल से कम है। लेकिन आपने यह नहीं बताया कि पिछले साल कितनी गड़बड़ी थी और इस साल आपको कितनी गड़बड़ी की शिकायत मिली। फिर हम देखें कि पिछले साल और इस साल गड़बड़ी की शिकायतों में कितनी कमी आई और कितना अंतर आया।

अन्त में मैं यही कहूंगा कि उपभोक्ता मंहन्दाय, कि उपभोक्ता को आप क्यों परेशान करते हैं। टेलीफोन काम करें या न करें, ठीक रहें या फिर टेलीफोन मर जायें। तो मरे हुए टेलीफोन के लिए हमको पैसा क्यों देना पड़े, उपभोक्ता क्यों उसका पैसा देगा ? अगर उपभोक्ता के ऊपर यह भार देने है, तो उसको कुछ रियायत दीजिए। हम टेलीफोन लगाएंगे, काल लगाए। आपके यहां और टेलीफोन वाले काल लगवा देंगे राज्य सभा के जनरल सेक्रेटरी को और भी हमारे ऊपर यह काल का भार पड़ गया। पैसा हम दें। एक तो आपसे बात करना चाहते हैं आपसे बात भी नहीं हुई, टेलीफोन भी कहीं का कहीं जोड़ दिया ऊपर से जुमाना भी दे। तो यह जो गड़बड़ी होती है, इसके लिए कौन जिम्मेदार है ? टेलीफोन विभाग जिम्मेदार है।

मैं अपनी बात को खत्म करते हुए यह कहूंगा कि टेलीफोन विभाग में जो अफ़्ताचार

है, आप उसके लिए क्या क्या उपाय करने हैं ? दरभंगा में एक्सचेंज में नहीं, टेलीफोन में लाखों रुपए का घाटा हुआ था । मैंने एक, दो, तीन, चार गांव पांच शिक्षा प्रमाण के साथ, कागज के साथ सब कुछ लेकर दे दिया और अभी तक कोई जांच नहीं हुई । उसका परिणाम क्या निकला, जानते हैं आप ? दरभंगा टेलीफोन एक्सचेंज में कांग्रेस के एक लीडर के संयोग से कांग्रेस के लीडर है और दुर्भाग्य से मेरे रिश्तेदार है, उनका लड़का टेलीफोन एक्सचेंज में अपरेटर है, जब मैंने टेलीफोन विभाग पर भ्रष्टाचार के आरोप लगाए, तो उस कांग्रेस के जो लीडर है, उनके लड़के का ट्राम्प करके पेंनेल्टी में बदल दिया कि तुम ने जाकर हकमदेव नारायण यादव जी को सारी बात बता दी है । और डिपार्टमेंट के खिलाफ तुमने कार्य किया है । हम कहते हैं कि आप जांच करें, भ्रष्टाचार के निश्चित आरोप है, यह सब गड़बड़ी चल रही है, तार ठीक से नहीं लगते हैं, गड़बड़े ठीक से नहीं खोदने इंजीनियर ठीक नहीं हैं, मकान ठीक नहीं हैं । आप इनको ठीक करके मदद में जवाब । मिश्रा जी, आप भले ही संतुष्ट हो जाइए । लेकिन जब तक देश के लोग संतुष्ट नहीं होंगे, तब तक आपके संतुष्ट होने से कोई भला होने वाला नहीं है ।

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA (Delhi): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am very grateful to the Members of the Opposition for tabling this Calling Attention on the telephone because for a man next to his wife, I think the telephone is the most important thing and sometimes it takes precedence over even his wife when you want to talk to your girl friend. I do know that it is sometimes expensive because as my hon. friends from the other side have said, you do get wrong numbers and you have to pay for them.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of my hon. colleagues from the other side to the size and dimension of this problem. We have heard about how telephones go dead when it rains. But you have to see what the

difficulties are, what is the kind of service that the telephones in a country as large as ours has to provide. You would agree with me, Sir, that even the metropolitan cities for which the Calling-Attention has been tabled have a very large number of telephones because we have a large population. We are a growing, dynamic society now and the pressure on the telephones for business is very high. On the one hand we desire a very heavy monsoon for our crops and on the other, we desire that the telephones should be operating even if the drainage system is not good and when the telephone exchange is under five feet of water, as the hon. Minister has pointed out. I am bringing this to your notice only to point out to you the framework in which the Telephones Department has to work. We have outmoded equipment—some of it, which was purchased long ago—and during this time there has been a lot of change in the technology in the world. New telephone exchanges—electronic exchanges—have recently been installed in Delhi and some other areas and, I am sure, Members would have noticed it themselves that they have been working very very satisfactorily. In fact, now it is possible for us to dial London from here and London to India and all the four metropolitan cities along with many other cities which can be reached directly.

Now, Sir, my friend, Mr. Gopal-samy, has mentioned about NAM and CHOGM. I agree with him that the telephones worked flawlessly at that time. Now, just because they worked flawlessly at that time, he seems to be complaining why they do not work flawlessly now. I would like to point out, Sir, that these telephones were installed recently, they were on the electronic exchange, they were wired for a specific purpose and, I am sure, it was done in a very short time and in a very good manner so that they operated very efficiently. Now, if the

[Shri Vishwa Bandhu Gupta]

same thing is to be extended to the whole country, then you would find that it is an extremely expensive proposition, it is an extremely time-consuming proposition and it is a very very large problem. Now if the Opposition Members should desire that all at once it can be done, I am sorry to say, Sir, it may not be possible because, if the Department of Communications has to do that, they have to dig up a major portion of those streets where the oldest are lying, everything else will come to a stop and, perhaps, in the 7th Five-Year Plan there will be nothing else working except the telephones. So, I would like to draw the attention of my hon. friends on the other side and say that they have to see this problem in its totality.

Now, there is a problem of wrong numbers. As I have mentioned, wrong numbers are obtained because we have cross-bar exchanges and some of the cross-bar exchanges cannot possibly operate with the same efficiency as the electronic exchanges. As the Minister has said, now the Department has gone in for a five-pronged programme for taking care of these problems. Now, he has mentioned about pressurization. Pressurizing the cables is a very important thing. Once the cables are pressurized, they tend to operate perfectly. Now they will be having the jolly-filled type so that there is less leakage of water. Let us remember that the main problem is of water seepage and, we all know that the electric current that passes through the cable gives the message across, and if there is a leakage, that makes it not very serviceable. The other answer the Minister has provided is PVC tubes. If cables are laid in PVC pipes embedded in cement concrete ducts, I am sure, it will work efficiently. Of course, when there is a break-down in the power supply in a large city like Bombay, there is bound to be difficulty.

I am not trying to defend the Department or to say that the communications system or the telephone system is perfect. My submission is that the size and type of the problem is so vast that Members must remember that this will take a certain amount of time to be solved. But specific steps are being taken. Modern technology is being imported. Efforts are being made to replace the old cables by electronic exchanges. In places like Kanpur, Delhi and some other areas the telephones are working perfectly.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN SHRI R. RAMAKRISHNAN): What is your experience with your own phone?

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA: My phone, I am happy to say, Sir, is working. I was coming to this problem. The numbers have been changed. Apart from that, the telephone is now working. The Bahadur Shah Zafar Exchange which houses most of the newspapers, was the most difficult one to get. But now after the introduction of the electronic exchange, that has become very easy.

You may remember that I had mentioned about provision of telephones in cars, which is a cordless system. I would urge upon the Minister that he may kindly take note of it if the cables are giving problems. Perhaps when we are going to the cordless system from the NDMC, as he has said, to all our cars, perhaps, it will not be affected by monsoon.

Of course, I agree with my friends from the Opposition that there is need for coordination in the services when they dig up the roads. I think this is the responsibility of the Communications Department because phones are affected. They must find out a system by which coordination is done at that time and indiscriminate digging is not done. (Time bell rings) I will just take a minute to finish.

One of the Members mentioned about the Telephone Advisory Committee. I think it is a good system. The telephone advisory system is to provide a bridge between the difficulties of the public and to bring them to the notice of the Communications Ministry and *vice versa*. They are able to explain in detail and get the correct data from their residents. I think this is a system which should be continued.

I would end by just saying one more suggestion that I would like to make to the Minister. Sir, you know that it is possible to dial Delhi-London and *vice versa*. But it is not possible to dial Delhi-New York, although it is possible to dial New York-Delhi. All over India where there is direct system, it is possible to dial from New York. I would recommend and suggest to the Minister that this system of dialing from Delhi to New York where the United Nations is located, should be there. We have a lot to do with about 101 countries, with whom we want to have better relations. Communication systems by which we can dial direct, would be very helpful. Expeditious steps may be taken.

One more suggestion, and I would have ended. The service that we get on 186, 182 or 187, where we are required to stay in queue, is a good system. The telephone operator comes and says, "You are in the queue. Please wait." But by the time you wait, at the end of it you find that you are in 187 instead of 186. So, you have got to wait for another ten minutes. My recommendation would be that the Minister may kindly have the tape or the system changed so that by suitable intervals they say, "You are in the queue in 187. Kindly wait." If you are in the wrong queue, you can put down the receiver and go in the next line.

I would again bring this to the notice of the hon. Members. Let us

look at the problems, and take out the problems which can be solved and give proper suggestions to the Communications Department. I am sure, coming few years will take care of most of the problems.

श्री बीरेन्द्र वर्मा (उत्तर प्रदेश) :

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, आज के युग में टेलीफोन का बहुत बड़ा महत्व है। इससे प्रशासन की कुशलता भी बढ़ती है, किरफायत भी होती है और समय भी बचता है। लेकिन दुर्भाग्य यह है कि टेलीफोन प्रायः खराब रहते हैं। केवल वर्षा के कारण नहीं, आम तौर पर साल भर टेलीफोन ठीक न रहने की शिकायत उपभोक्ताओं की रहती है। जब शिकालत यहां दिल्ली में है, मुजफ्फर नगर में है तो फिर गांवों की स्थिति का माननीय मंत्री अंदाजा लगा सकते हैं कि जो वहां टेलीफोन एस्टेब्लिश किए गए हैं उनकी क्या स्थिति होगी?

मान्यवर, मुजफ्फरनगर जिला ऐसा है, कोई विशेषता है जिसकी वजह से मुजफ्फरनगर जिला हिन्दुस्तान के हर टाउन के साथ, हर सिटी के साथ डाइरेक्ट डायलिंग से जुड़ा हुआ है। लेकिन मुजफ्फरनगर के एडवोकेट्स कहते थे कि भाई मंत्री जी से कहकर अगर कोई ऐग्रीमेंट ऐसा हो जाए कि 15 दिन तो हमारा टेलीफोन ठीक रह जाए तो हम उस पर संतोष कर लेंगे, ऐसा ही ऐग्रीमेंट करा दीजाएगा। ठेके पर वह देने के लिए तैयार है कि 15 दिन हमारा टेलीफोन ठीक रहे। मान्यवर, मैं एम०पी० हूं, 7वें, आठवें दिन जब मैं मुजफ्फरनगर जाता हूं तो वहां मेरा टेलीफोन ठीक नहीं मिलता। ए०ई० एस०डी० ओ० को, डी०ई०टी० को टेलीफोन से मैं कहता हूं, शिकायत करता हूं, मजबूर होकर मैंने यहां जो लायजॉ अफिसर हैं पार्लियामेंट ऐनेक्सी में, मिस्टर सक्सेना, उनको भी लिखकर दिया, उन्होंने भी सब जगह लिखकर भेजा, भेजते रहते हैं, मुजफ्फरनगर और दिल्ली के अधिकारियों के पास, मगर उसमें कोई सुधार नहीं हुआ। तो जब हमारे टेलीफोन की यह स्थिति है तो

[श्री मंगेन्द्र वर्मा]

औरों की क्या होगी ? मैंने माननीय मंत्री जी को लिखा है मजबूर होकर, श्रमिकों की कठिग भी उसके साथ भेजी है, जिसमें लिखा है कि मुजफ्फरनगर के व्यापारी वर्ग की, जिनकी बावत यहां एक माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि व्यापारियों के तो कभी टेलीफोन गलत नहीं रहते हैं, वे पैसे देकर ठीक रहते हैं, लेकिन उन्हें भी शिकायत है कि 75 प्रतिशत खराब है। मुजफ्फरनगर की तो स्थिति ज्यादा खराब है, पता नहीं किस कारण है ? वहां का कहना है कि जो ऐक्सचेंज है वह गरम रहता है, वगैरह-वगैरह। तो मान्यवर, वहां की स्थिति ऐसी है, दिल्ली की स्थिति ऐसी है। टेलीफोन ठीक करने के लिए आते रहते हैं, फिर भी सुधार कुछ नहीं हो पाता। गलत नम्बर मिलते हैं। गलत लोगो के जवाब आते रहते हैं कि यह हमारा नम्बर है, आपका नहीं है। दूसरे नम्बर पर करें तो फिर उन्हीं का टेलीफोन आ जाता है। 178 पर आप शिकायत करते हैं तो बार बार 176 मिलता है। 197, 181, 180 और 188 ये चार नम्बर तो, मान्यवर, एम है कि जिन्होंने एक नया तरीका निकाला है। वह कहते हैं कि कृपया इंतजार कीजिये, आप क्यू में हैं। काईडली वेट, यू और इन दि क्यू। वह रेकार्ड आपने चढ़ा दिया और इतमीनान के साथ बैठ गये। 10 मिनट तक बैठने के बाद भी नहीं मिला। 199 पर मैंने 10 मिनट तक इंतजार किया, फिर भी वही रेकार्ड कि कृपया इंतजार कीजिये, आप क्यू में हैं। मैंने आखिर ऊपर के अधिकारी से कहा तो उन्होंने कहा कि यह तो गलत है। इतनी देर तो नहीं करनी चाहिये। लेकिन आपने रेकार्ड चढ़ा दिया, ये बात करते रहते हैं, चाय पीते रहते हैं और कहते हैं कि यू अपार इन दि क्यू। तो हम क्यू में खड़े हैं। माननीय मंत्री जी से मैं निवेदन करूंगा कि क्यू को छोटा कर दे तो ठीक होगा। हमारा भी समय बचेगा और एफिशियेंसी बढ़ेगी। अतः जैसा मैंने प्रारंभ में कहा था, फिर दोबारा कहना चाहता हूं कि अगर दिल्ली और मुजफ्फरनगर के टेलीफोनो की यह स्थिति है तो जो गांवों

के टेलीफोन हैं, और कस्बों में लगे हुये हैं, उनकी क्या हालत होगी जलालाबाद में हमारे एक मयूर अली साहब भूतपूर्व एम० पी० हैं उनके यहां टेलीफोन लगा हुआ है लेकिन एक भी काल उनकी नहीं मिलती और न उनमें कोई मिला सकता।

उनसे मैं कोई बात भी नहीं कर सकता। टेलीफोन की स्थिति यह है। चार्ज बढ़ाने चगे जा रहे हैं। चार्ज बढ़ाने में आप कोई कमी नहीं करते, इन्फिशियेंसी आपके यहां कम नहीं हो रही है। इस तरह से आपका ध्यान मे खासतौर से खीचना चाहता हूं रांग बिल की तरफ। हमारे यहां एक एम० पी० है मत्थ प्रकाश मालवीय। उनकी वाइफ टीचर हैं वाराणसी यूनिवर्सिटी में। उनका टेलीफोन नम्बर है 54130। यूनिवर्सिटी की छुट्टी हो गई मई-जून के महीने में। जुलाई में वह वापस आ गई। 25 मई को एक टेलीफोन काल किसी ने किया। कॉन्फॉरमिदा, अमेरिका का और 85 रुपये का बिल मत्थ प्रकाश मालवीय जी के नाम डाल दिया गया। वह बिल है टेलीफोन नम्बर 64130 का जबकि मालवीय जी का नम्बर है 54130। जिसने टेलीफोन पर बात की है वह 64130 से की है और बिल भेज दिया गया है टेलीफोन नम्बर 54130 पर जो मालवीय जी का है। 85 रुपये का बिल भेज दिया गया। उन्होंने भी माननीय मंत्री जी को अग्रोच किया है, आशा है न्याय मिलेगा। माननीय मंत्री जी को कुछ समय पहले मैं एक शिकायत और दी थी। दिल्ली के एक डाक्टर है। 25 फरवरी को डाक्टर साहब के यहां इन्स्ट्रुमेंट में कंक्शन दिया गया। 24 मार्च को पूरे एक महीने बाद उनके यहां बिल पहुंचा और उसमें दर्जगी हुई है 3 हजार काल्स। जिनकी मैं चर्चा कर रहा हूं यह उनके घर का टेलीफोन है। वह डाक्टर साहब सुबह-शाम 8 घंटे अपने क्लीनिक पर रहते हैं और एक महीने का 3 हजार काल का उनके घर के टेलीफोन पर बिल आ जाता है। कोई यकीन करेगा ? सुबह से लेकर शाम तक लगातार वह क्लीनिक पर रहते हैं। 3 हजार काल्स कैसे आ गई सम्झ नहीं आता जब कि वह वहां रहते नहीं हैं। इस प्रकार के रांग बिल्स, किसी दूसरे के

कहीं दूसरी जगह भेज दिये जाते हैं। मंत्री महोदय से अपेक्षा करूंगा कि इस तरफ इनका ध्यान जरूर जाना चाहिये और शहरों को भी ठीक कर दे। वैसे तो हिन्दुस्तान देहातों में रहता है लेकिन शहर ही ठीक नहीं हुये तो देहातों को तो आप क्या ठीक करेंगे। लेकिन आपका ध्यान देहात की तरफ चला जाय तो बहुत ही अच्छा होगा। वे भी पेमेंट करने हैं। शहर वालों में कम नहीं करने। अगर उनकी तरफ आपका ध्यान हो सके और इन लोगों का भी सुधार हो जाय तो आपकी बड़ी भारी कृपा होगी। हम तैयार हैं टेका भी करने के लिये डिपार्टमेंट में अगर 15 दिन भी ठीक चले तो मैं तैयार हूं।

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you personally as well as other Members who have participated in this Call Attention and much more so to the persons who have listened to the debate. Though the subject of the Call Attention was of a very limited nature, mainly concerning the faults that arise during the monsoon season in certain cities, the discussion, as was to be expected, has gone round covering various aspects of telecommunication development, efficiency of service, our expansion programme, import of technology and other matters that are really relevant and important. It is gratifying that the importance of telecommunications in the developmental process of the country is now being realised. The interest shown by the Members and otherwise outside also shows that it is no longer regarded as something of an urban elitist luxury which can be dispensed with. But it is regarded as an integral part of our development which directly helps in the economic and social development of our country. We wish this realisation had come earlier and had been reflected in our various plans that have gone before so that many

problems that we are facing today would not have been there before us. One of the difficulties of the present situation is that there was a lack of investment in the previous plan in the telecommunication sector and now that we have realised its importance, we are faced with the situation that there is a backlog, a tremendous backlog, which has to be made good, whether it is by way of replacement of antiquated equipment, installation of new lines, taking it to the rural, hilly and tribal areas. This problem has now arisen all of a sudden and one of the reasons why the system cannot be improved dramatically in the short run is this backlog in investment in this sector. When we became independent there were just about 80,000 telephone lines and now it is about 29 lakh telephone lines, a very remarkable achievement from any point of view. But still the waiting list has been increasing over the plans. Just to give some idea, at the end of the Third plan the waiting list was about 3.5 lakhs, at the end of the Fourth plan it increased to 5.32 lakhs, at the end of the Sixth Plan it was 8.38 lakhs, and the waiting list has been increasing and now it is a little more than that, it is about 8.6 lakhs. The Sixth Plan consisted of various items and in terms of money it was Rs. 2,730 crores and in the Seventh plan what we have proposed to the Planning Commission and the Working Group of the Planning Commission agreed to, is a little less than Rs. 12,000 crores which they regarded as the minimum necessary for strengthening the system to take us over the hump so that in the next one or two Plans we might be able to provide a satisfactory service. The indications are that we will not get anything like this figure, anything like this allocation, because of resource constraints. We are in touch with the Planning Commission. I am very grateful to the Members for saying that more and more resources should be made available to this sector. I hope the Planning Commission and other authorities concerned in this would take note of

[Shri Ram Niwas Mirdha]

this and give us sufficient funds so that we might be able to provide a service which is reasonably good.

Provision of monetary allocation, is one thing and how we use it is another thing. A lot has been said about import of technology. You yourself have mentioned about optical fibre, jellyfilled cables, etc. We are very much conscious of the fact that we should adopt the latest technology in this respect. And we have adopted for our telephone exchanges the latest digital technology and we propose to continue this policy of using the latest technological innovations for the improvement of our telecom system. Even for taking it to the remote rural and hilly and tribal areas we are using and will further expand our satellite communication. It is because there are distant areas and we cannot have cables and underground or over-ground and, therefore, satellite communication system has been resorted to in this respect and we will continue to do so.

Mr. Sukomal Sen raised a very important point. He asked as to why, when we introduce this new technology, it does not work here and why it works in foreign countries. Well, Sir, it is not correct that we are not able to absorb the technology and work it properly. Our problems are of a very basic nature. The new electronic telephone exchange and the new technology need air-conditioning and a certain environment, climatic environment, to function optimally. In foreign countries this problem does not exist because most of the time they are able to work with their natural climatic conditions. But here we have to use air-conditioning equipment in all our electronic and digital exchanges. Failure of electricity is very well known to all the Members. This one infrastructural difficulty is a very important cause of most failures in the cities as well as well as in the districts. Electricity goes off or hours and hours and if the air-conditioning goes off alongwith that, the exchange is bound

not only to be inefficient, but is also bound to get damaged. So, this is adding to our problems. While we are introducing new technology, these types of concomitant requirements have to be met which means providing climatic condition, proper environment, temperature, lack of humidity etc., so that these latest instruments can work at optimal efficiency. In foreign countries there is nothing like break-down of electricity for hours and there is nothing like break-down of air-conditioning. I would not go into the various causes. But, in short, these are some of the difficulties that we come across in this. Another reason why the foreign technology does not function well is the intensity of our traffic. In the United Kingdom, there are only two calls per telephone per day. In Japan, a telephone is used for 16 minutes in 24 hours, and all these technologies are geared to that type of traffic where there is almost a saturation limit and where penetration of telephones is so widespread that the calls are less and less and the efficiency is more and more. Our efficiency would increase after a point where we reach a certain level of expansion and penetration of telephones because the more the traffic, the greater the system gets closed with the result that wrong numbers would come and there is waiting in the queue and problems arise because of this. And, when the foreign experts come here, they say, "We have never come across such traffic features and there is hardly anything that we can advise on this." So, it is to the credit of our engineers and technicians that they are facing this problem in a very good way, expert way, and are trying to find solutions which are an improvement on the system that we have imported in many ways and the foreign experts also recognise this.

There is another thing for which you should praise our engineers and technicians and it is this that the new exchanges have to be used in conjunction with all types of exchanges, Strowger exchanges, crossbar exchanges, electronic exchanges and electronic digital exchanges. You

have to use them in conjunction with all these varieties of exchanges and also see how to make them properly inter-phase between various types of exchanges which is another challenge to our technicians and I think they have done very well in this. And here also, no one can teach us because we know much more about it and by our own experience and expertise we have developed this system which is fairly satisfactory and we are seeing how the various exchanges can be put in conjunction with one another and proper results come out of this.

Well, Sir, apart from import of technology, we want to manufacture most of the things here. Self-sufficiency has always been our policy. The Indian Telephone Industries, which was established very soon after Independence, is the first major public sector undertaking. Let us look at the foresight of our leaders. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and others. At that time they foresaw the importance of self-reliance as well as the importance of telecommunications and started a big factory at the ITI in Bangalore which has now many units. It has expanded tremendously. The 1948 technology, as was mentioned, is now being replaced. New telephones of the latest electronic type are to be manufactured by the ITI at Bangalore as well as at Naini, and not only the ITI but a number of other corporations, private as well as State corporations. Electronic Development Corporations have also been given the licence to manufacture telephone instruments, and very soon we will have a variety of highly sophisticated telephone instruments, and we will make a good improvement in that respects. The ITI will manufacture 5 lakhs instruments in Bangalore and five lakhs instruments per year in Naini. After this, the private sector will also do this. While mentioning the private sector, I would like to say that one important policy decision that we have taken recently is to allow the private sector in the telecommunications to manufacture them. Up till now it was the State monopoly. No other sector except the public sector, the ITI, was manufacturing any tele-communication instruments etc. But now what we

call the subscribers' instruments, telephone instruments, etc., the private sector has been allowed to manufacture them. Licences have been given to the private sector not only, but many of the joint sector and State Electronic Development Corporations have come in; we have involved the private sector also, because unless we do so we will not be able to increase our production of tele-communication equipment at the rate at which we wanted.

Now, Sir, a lot has been said about failure of instruments in the telephone system during the rainy season. I have given various reasons. Hukmdeo Narayanji mentioned about Bombay, if the telephone exchanges were affected because of unprecedented rains or because the site was not proper. Well, the rains were not unprecedented, but it was due to the clogging of drains, etc. The drainage system in the cities and in the country-side also in one of the reasons for flooding of drainage. It also makes the floods so dangerous. In Bombay there have been rains before but that did not happen. The system got clogged, and it happens like this. In some exchanges the flooding was 2 ft, in others it was as much as 5 ft. It happened in the Connaught Place exchange in the late 50's. There was serious flood and the Connaught Place exchange got flooded. That does not mean that the planning was wrong, but due to many factors the drainage in the city is getting clogged, with the result that some flash rains create this sort of situation. Well, we are very much conscious of it and we are trying to do all that we can. In this respect I have written letters recently to the Chief Ministers to please coordinate the activities of all utility agencies which do road-cutting. There are the electricity people, water people, sewage people, etc. We want them to coordinate so that when one thing is done the other installations, cables, etc. do not get damaged, and I do hope, that we will receive proper cooperation from the State Governments in this respect. The main cause of this breakdown is that the cables get damaged. We are taking other steps, as I mentioned earlier in my original statement, and we will continue to do so.

[Shri Ram Niwas Mirdha]

There are many other **points raised**, Shri Gopalsamy, he is not there..asked: if you could do it during CHOGM why can't you do now? We had to divert a lot of manpower. We had to reserve lot of lines, international as well as national. We could do it only for a short period. We can still reach the same level of efficiency as in CHOGM or Asian Games or NAM meeting if we are given the same conditions of work, latest equipment, access to international lines, etc. The same people can do it again. But it would require a lot of investment and change of equipment. We cannot divert our resources as we did at the time of CHOGM because it is just not possible.

This brings me to the development of manpower development in our sector. While we are having introduction of new technology, a big effort is being made for training these people in latest technology for which a big programme is being introduced. Shri Sukomal Sen asked whether automation will lead to unemployment and what will happen to the staff. There is no question of retrenchment. We are constantly in touch with the Associations. This dialogue goes on and we will see to it that all these things are introduced with the least possible disturbance in any manner. Training can be technical. Training can be motivational and administrative. People can be taught how to behave and what their duties are and how to be courteous. We will see that during this training process we are able to provide a proper service to our customers and particularly to the Members of Parliament.

I will end by saying that we regard the person whom we serve or the consumer as very important because the quality of service will depend upon the satisfaction we are able to give to these people. It is our constant endeavour to see that the consumer gets a good deal. There are a lot of complaints, such as wrong billing, excess metre reading and tampering of metres. We are very much conscious of this and we are trying to see that with the cooperation of staff how we can go about doing so.

I will just mention that in most of the major exchanges the absenteeism is of the order of 30 per cent or 40 per cent. No system can work well if that sort of absenteeism is there. When you ring 197 or 199, nobody is there. You get on getting "you are in the queue". We are in touch with the staff associations. We are talking to them. We are also formulating schemes for giving some rewards or incentive for regular attendance. We hope that some of the methods we are trying to adopt will help improve matters.

There was a very valid question. If the telephone remains out of order for long, why should the consumer be made to pay rent? I agree with this. We have already started a procedure in the Telecommunication Board and they are examining a proposal as to what sort of rebate should be given in the rental to the consumer if the telephones are out of order for a long time. Even our records show that certain telephones have been out of order. I think that some sort of rebate should be given. We feel that something should be done. I hope that the Telecommunication Board will come out with a scheme to give some satisfaction to the consumer whose telephone is out of order.

Telephone Advisory Committee's role was mentioned. Member of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and some other interests such as doctors, industry, trade, services etc. are represented in it. We are trying to see that there is a greater involvement of the T.A.C. in the functioning of telecommunication. There are various ideas before us. We want it to be a very helpful and meaningful organisation so that it can act as a link between the consumers and our Department and try to put across things in a proper and systematic way. Apart from this, we have started a procedure of having once or twice a year a meeting of the Members of Parliament with our Telecom people at the State capital so that they can sit with them. Those who are not the members of the TAC can also come, and we will ask for an agenda and which areas they are interested in, which section

is working and which section is not working. And we will see that some answer is given to them right on the spot when the meeting takes place. We are introducing this also so that a gradual involvement and supervision by Members of Parliament and public representatives will be there as to how we function. We have nothing to hide. We want to tell everything about your difficulties, about our problems and seek your co-operation as to how we can improve them. And we are trying to introduce a system of consultation with public representatives at various levels.

Sir, Virendra Bandhuji, as usual, has a number of new ideas. Car radios is something which he has been saying for a long time. Well Sir, we have a research project not only for introducing mobile car radios but also the paging system which is also in great demand by professionals and others. They are research projects at the present time. But this mobile car radio would be commercialised very soon. In the new tall NDMC building, we have asked for space at the top to have a transmitter and other instruments. And when these things are sorted out, we will very soon make it in a commercial way available. And the same thing we propose to do about the paging system.

Well, Sir, as regards international direct dialling, it is true that we do not have it at present with the US and some other countries though we have, with the UK and some other countries. So, our policy here also is that we want to have more and more of them, and we are negotiating for more satellite circuits with international organisations. And once that is through, USA and other countries would also be added to our international STD.

Sir, Virendra Vermaji raised a lot of points about the telephones not functioning in his area and other things, particularly about the rural areas. Sir, our policy is to take the telecommunication to the rural areas. And there is a demand for this. It is not generally realised how

much telephone is needed or good communications are needed in the rural areas. Many regulated markets, have some sub-markets have come. Market-yards have been developed. And there are places where the business activity concerned with agriculture takes place. And we are having a survey of these areas and we will try to provide good service to them. For the rural areas again one of the problems is about over-head wires. So, we are introducing the radio, what we call the MARR multi-access radio relay system—which means, a certain area of 50 to 60 villages would be connected by the wireless system. We have already introduced the system in some villages on an experimental measure. And we are seeing whether it can be productionised in India also. And if this experiment succeeds though it is a little costly, that would not be a hindrance in taking the telecommunication to the rural areas. I have already mentioned about the distant hill and tribal areas. A satellite communication is being used in the north-eastern region in a very big way. And we are very much conscious that telephone should not be just an urban appendix but a rural area should also be given the benefit of modern communication.

In the end, I can assure you, Sir, through you the whole House that it will always be our endeavour to provide as efficient a service as possible. And given your support and if we get sufficient resources in the Seventh Plan we will endeavour with your co-operation to succeed in providing the service which is to your satisfaction. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SRI R. RAMAKRISHNAN): That concludes the business for the day. The House stand adjourned till 11 a.m. on Monday, the 29th July, 1985.

The House then adjourned at five minutes past six of the clock, on Monday, the 29th July, 1985.