

vides for interception of postal articles under certain orders, order certain authorities. Now, whether any such order has been issued or whether any of them is operating, I am not able to say at the moment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You want notice.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Nigam. Then we pass on to next question.

श्री लाडली मोहन निगम : सभापति महोदय, क्या मंत्री जी को यह पता है कि हिन्दुस्तान में एक समानान्तर डाक व्यवस्था चल रही है। समानान्तर डाक व्यवस्था से मेरा मतलब है कि यहां पर कुछ एजेंसियां हैं जो लोगों से चिट्ठियां लेती हैं और उनके गन्तव्य स्थान तक पहुंचा देती हैं और उसे पर अपना पैसा अलग से लेती हैं—उन पर स्टाम्प नहीं लगाया जाता। ऐसी एजेंसियां हैं जो पेरल चल रही हैं। मैंने उन लोगों से पूछा कि आप ऐसा क्यों करते हैं तो उन्होंने बताया कि डाक में जब चिट्ठियां डालते हैं तो वह गायब होती रहती हैं। इसलिए हिन्दुस्तान के मेट्रो-पोलिटन सिटीज में एक व्यवस्था हो गयी है कि उनका आदमी जगह-जगह जा कर खासकर व्यापारिक संस्थाओं की डाक इकट्ठी करता है और ले जाकर दूसरी जगह पहुंचाता है। इससे कितना नुकसान हो रहा है, इसका कुछ ज्ञान है आपको या नहीं? अगर नहीं है तो क्या आप पता लगाने की कोशिश करेंगे, जितनी एजेंसियां हैं, जितनी व्यवस्थाएं चल रही हैं उनके बारे में आप कोई कदम उठायेंगे या नहीं। जिस कानून का आप ने हवाला दिया है उसके बारे में मैं इतना ही निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि वह साम्राज्यवादी जमाने का कानून है। उसमें यह लिखा है डाक खोलने का कानून सिर्फ इमरजेंसी के दौरान हो सकता है। क्या हिन्दुस्तान में अभी भी

इमरजेंसी चल रही है यह जरा बताने की कृपा करें।

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, two questions have been put. With respect to the first question, I have already answered in reply to the main question. Some such case came to our notice; we investigated into it but nothing is operating on such a mass scale, though there are some violations. We have gone into the same. With respect to the second part, I have already answered. He wants to know about the specific section. It is Section 26 of the Postal Act which is relevant for the purpose of interception of letters.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

ALLOTMENT OF TELEPHONES UNDER THE 'CYT' CATEGORY

*102. SHRI GURUDEV GUPTA:
SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH:†

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons on the waiting list for telephones under the 'CYT' category in Delhi as on 31st July, 1981;

(b) the number of persons likely to be allotted new telephone connections during the current year; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to clear the waiting list?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KARTIK ORAON):
(a) 9112 as on 1-7-1981.

(b) It is expected to release approximately 10,000 new connections during 1981-82, on completion of the expansion programme of the exchanges. The existing waiting list except for a few pockets, is expected to be cleared by the end of 1983-84.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Hamida Habibullah.

(c) The existing exchanges are being expanded and new ones are being opened.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBUL-LAH: Sir, in Delhi, to own his decorative instrument, which is called a telephone, has become a prestigious issue; everybody wants to own a telephone. But Sir, we are told that the ordinary subscriber...

AN. HON. MEMBER: As a show piece.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBUL-LAH: Well, in Delhi, in most cases, it seems to be so.

SHRI PILOO MODY: It is over.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBUL-LAH: It is nice to own it; but we are told that the ordinary subscriber...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which colour?

श्रीमती हमीदा हबीबुल्लह : लाल,
पीला, हरा ।

Sir, you also had difficulty on telephone one day. You complained to me about it. Sir, we are told that the ordinary subscribers...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not know, I never rang her up.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Complaint on the telephone.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Sir, Mrs. Margaret Alva has been saying the same thing about another gentleman. (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBUL-LAH: Sir, I am not able to put the question since everybody is laughing. There seems to be so much laughter. Sir, we are told that the ordinary subscribers who have deposited the necessary amount are put on the last category. The hon. Minister has not told us how many are pending. He has not answered the question totally. We do not know how many are pending.

I would like to know whether large number of telephones are being allotted on the basis of recommendations only. This is the story going on. It has been said that without recommendations, no telephone is being allotted to any subscriber. Hence, I would like to know whether it is true that the special category, the general category and the recommendatory category have an over-riding preference over the own your telephone subscriber. I would like to know whether there are any special categories who get their telephone connections out of turn before the persons who have deposited the money.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, I have not been able to follow her.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I also.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: There are three categories of registration. More than three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What I could gather, Mr. Minister, was, whether the priority between the different categories have been properly settled or not.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: This has been very, very clearly settled. There is a general category. Then, there are some classes of people, say, doctors, certain types of Government servants, eminent public men and so on. They come under the special category. Then, there is a OYT category. There are businessmen under the OYT category who have foreign exchange to their credit. They are put on the special category. Different types of categories are spelt out. When telephone connections are given, there are specific directions which lay down what percentage should be given to the special category people, what percentage should be given to the OYT category people, what percentage should be given to the general category people and so on. These are all very well laid down. There are well laid down rules about this. As far as the persons in the general

category are concerned, nobody has got the right to give an over-riding priority to anybody. No officer, no Minister has got the right to give an over-riding priority to anybody. In regard to the special and OYT categories, there is a discretion to give priority on an over-riding basis. But after I assumed charge, I took the position that this discretion should not be exercised and everybody has got his own right to come on the line. Only in very very exceptional cases, which are very few, such priority has been given. This is a matter which could be subject to scrutiny. A firm position has been taken that a recommendatory category cannot exist and it is not existing.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH: Sir the hon. Minister has not given us any idea as to the number on the waiting list. However,...

SHRI PILOO MODY: However, ask him.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH: This is by the way. (Interruptions) I am not stopping anybody else from asking any question. For so many years, deposit under the OYT scheme has been and is being paid to the Department. Since the Department has been holding this money for so many years, I would like to know whether they are paying any interest to the subscriber.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Yes, Sir. For the money deposited, interest is being paid and interest will continue to be paid until they get the telephone instrument on the table.

SHRI NARSINGH NARAIN PANDEY: Sir, the hon. Minister has said that ten thousand applications under the OYT category are pending. But he has not given the category in figure. He has not said how many pending in the general category, the special category and connections. In cases, he has got letter, for the tele

If he gives this figure, then, we will come to the conclusion that so many telephone connections are likely to be given to the subscribers. This figure has not been given.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is because only one figure was asked.

SHRI NARSINGH NARAIN PANDEY: No, Sir. The question asked in part (b) is: the number of persons likely to be allotted new telephone connections during the current year. 'New Telephone connections' means ordinary, special, recommendatory type connections etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: OYT type.

SHRI NARSINGH NARAIN PANDEY: Yes, OYT type also. So, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he will give certain figures so that the House could understand what the real position is, and what the Department is doing.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, he wanted to know the number of recommendatory connections on the waiting list. I said that the recommendatory applications are not taken note of and, therefore, I cannot give figures as to how many recommendations came to me—let me make it very clear.

To explain the position with 3,000 to the waiting list in Dec. waiting odd people are there. Now is to list as on day. Our list by the clear the entire 1-82 we are in year 1983-84. In which will come stalling 22 Nehru Place and different this changes. Next year we are Hang 31,000 lines. So, altogether the next 84. To say that one lakh connections will be installed does not mean that all connections will be given, because for giving of connections it will take about six months, which means by about 1984 August-September time

we will be able to give connections of this order and even then there will be some exchanges where it will not be possible to clear up all the backlog because of certain infrastructural difficulties. I am now taking steps to see that in all the exchanges wherever there is a waiting list, that waiting list must be cleared by 1983-84. There are infrastructural difficulties which I am personally looking into. Reallocation is taking place. For example, Shahdara is a place where a large number of applications are coming up. People are shifting there. According to the present plan we can get connections only by the next Plan. I am asking them to reallocate the whole thing. Hauz Khas is another area where there is pressure. Reallocation is taking place there. The point is that there are 77,000 odd people on the waiting list today and we are installing equipment of the capacity of one lakh which will enable me to clear up the waiting list by 1984 end. Even then the waiting list will be there because new demands will be coming up and we are going ahead with it. Out of these about 35,000 telephone instruments will be of the anode electronic type. That also will be installed in Delhi.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: Sir, I know that the Minister is trying his best to clean one of the most corrupt departments that has been put in his charge.

CHAIRMAN: Why this comment, Zakaria?

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: But, Sir, I would like to know whether he is aware from him whether he is aware of these various categories under these talked there is a category 'exempted category' which he has exempted category. He has exempted the some of these are referred to the Telecom Advisory Committees attached to each telephone zone and, Sir, in these Telecom Advisory Committees there is a kind of allocation of certain number of telephones to be decided by each member.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Patronage.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: A kind of patronage which is distributed. It is well understood that one member will give his three names, the other member will give his three names and, for instance, in Bombay there is a regular racket that is going on. It may be that there are some members who are very honest, who go into this whole question and they recommend only genuine cases, but in most of the cases, as a result of this power given to the Advisory Committees, a lot of corruption is taking place. Moneys are openly being taken for getting telephones in this exempted category. Is the Minister aware of it and if so, what steps does he propose to take?

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: I am aware of the fact that the TAC has got some powers to decide as to whether a person must come under the special category or not. I am not aware of the position that for this purpose money is passing hands. Now that the hon. Member has stated, I will take note of it.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: No, Sir. He can ask one of his General Managers and let the General Manager speak in confidence to him. Then he will know how the racket is working.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: That means the General Manager is also a party to that. I do not want to do that.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: I am not saying that. (Interruptions) You have given the powers. (Interruptions)

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Now I understand it. I take note of this information.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: Powers have been taken away from the General Manager. (Interruptions)

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: May I sub-
give originally the position was
member of the TAC could
as to a specific number

of persons. After I took charge, I said: "This is wrong and if it has got to be done, the TAC must as a body decide by secret ballot as to so many applicants must get it." This is the new procedure now introduced. Before that, a member of the TAC could give connections to a specific number of people. This power has been taken away. In its place, whatever can be given must be given by the TAC as a body by secret ballot.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: You mean the list is prepared by the office or is it on the basis of recommendations?

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: No, by the office. Anyway the procedural part of it can be further looked into. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: A racket is going on in Bombay. (*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI MOHINDER KAUR: I would like to ask the hon. Minister what about the telephone connections which have already been given. He says the functioning of the telephones is improving. When will it improve? In the Capital as well as in the State of Punjab, the telephones are always in disorder and they are not functioning. It is all right you are giving new connections. But what about the old connections which have already been given? They are not functioning. When will the functioning of the old telephone connections improve?

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, this is a question which has come up umpteenth times here. So long as telephones are there, the complaints will be there. And one of the methods by which I want to improve this is to stop more connections in the same exchange beyond its capacity to bear it. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PILOO MODY: Kindly note that he has only promised to supply an instrument and not service behind it. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI MOHINDER KAUR: I have not been able to understand what he said. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You better ask him. He cannot promise the working of every instrument. That is what he said.

SHRIMATI MOHINDER KAUR: The telephones are always not functioning.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, I must go correctly on record. I did not say I cannot promise a better service. Better service is there. We are striving for better service. People are now feeling that it is better and that is why the demand is mounting up in such a manner. Nobody wants a dead telephone. Everyone knows the telephones are working. That is why the demand is coming. Everything is being done to improve it. Things are not the best. (*Interruptions*) Bear with me my brothers.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: The telephones are not working properly. There is no improvement. What the Minister has said is not correct. The situation is worsening day by day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is a Question Hour...

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: I demand a Half-an-Hour Discussion on the subject.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Many times the discussion has taken place.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question Hour is for eliciting information. You are giving information which is known to the House.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: There is no improvement at all. He says there is improvement in the situation. This is contrary to facts.

SHRIMATI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY: The Minister-in-charge

gave a categorical assurance giving a stipulated time by which he can make telephones available to the applicants of different categories. It envisages production of that number of telephone instruments. Has the Minister linked up the requirement and the production and has he any scheme which he is implementing to step up production of the instruments?

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, in the first place I did not give an assurance that telephones will be given on demand by 1983-84. It will not be possible. All I said was, by 1983-84 all the present waiting list will be cleared. This is what I said. But it is our calculation that by 1990 we must be in a position to give telephones on demand. For that our capacity is being expanded and in the Rae Bareilly factory we are putting up additional requirement for the production of two lakhs of crossbar exchanges immediately, and starting from 1985 two telephone factories for electronic type of equipment will come up with a production capacity of one million per year, that is, half a million each, and those factories will be producing the most advanced type of equipment and not analogue but digital type of electronic equipment will be produced.

SHRIMATI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY: Have you produced the prototype for that also and, if so, has it been demonstrated?

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Nobody produces a prototype that way. We have called for global tenders and with respect to Rae Bareilly the contract has been signed, the building is coming up and production will start.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Last question. Mr. Mitra.

श्री प्यारेलाल खंडेलवाल : 1983-84

मिलने वाले...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, please sit down. Not to be recorded.

(Shri Pyarelal Khandelwal continued to speak)

SHRI SANKAR PRASAD MITRA: You have just stated, Sir, that hon. Members of this House are giving information already known to the House. The hon. Minister has said that the services are improving. But, so far as the city of Calcutta is concerned, I can tell the hon. Minister that the services are not improving at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But this is a Delhi question. You have just come to Delhi. Delhi is better, probably.

PRODUCTION OF SODA ASH

*103. SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA:
SHRI NARASINGHA PRASAD NANDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the domestic production of Soda Ash is sufficient to meet the current demand in the country; and

(b) if not, what steps Government propose to take to guarantee regular supplies of Soda Ash to the small scale sector in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) The demand for Soda Ash in 1980-81 was estimated to be 6.30 lakh tonnes and in 1981-82 6.80 lakh tonnes. As against this demand, the production in 1980-81 was 5.63 lakh tonnes and in the first four months of 1981-82 (April-July) 2.09 lakh tonnes. The production in the first four months of 1981-82 was higher than that in the corresponding four months of 1980-81 by 24.7 per cent. If this trend conti-

*The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Margaret Alva.