

S.T.D. Linking of State Capitals with Delhi

* 393. SHRI SAT PAUL MITTAL:

SHRIMATI MAIMOONA
SULTANSHRIMATI PRATIBHA
SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state when all the State Capitals are likely to be connected with Delhi through the S.T.D. system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEO SARDI): All State Capitals except Imphal (Manipur) and Agartala (Tripura) have already been connected to Delhi by STD. Agartala and Imphal are at present manual exchanges and are expected to be automatised by 1982 and 1983 respectively. STD to Delhi can be provided thereafter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Shrimati Pratibha Singh. Mr. Madhavan, please allow her to ask two supplementary questions.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Sir, the voice of the hon. Minister was so low that I could not hear the whole answer that he gave. Anyway, what I could understand is that he mentioned all the State capitals. ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Except two.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: except two have been connected to Delhi by STD. May I know what the programme in the next Five Year Plan is? Is he going to extend this facility to district headquarters also?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already said that by 1982 and 1983 Agartala and Imphal exchanges will be automatised.

SHRI KALYAN ROY.: The lines are there, but are they working?

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Sir, has he made sure that the STD lines connecting Delhi with the various State capitals are in a working condition? If they are not, what is he going to do about it? There was a proposal to give meters to subscribers also. When are they going to give them meters? A provision for this purpose was made in the last Plan allocation. Even the P.A.C. had visited some centres and made some recommendations. What were the recommendations made by them?

श्री नरहरी प्रसाद सुखदेव सई : सभापति महोदय, हमने दिल्ली से स्टेट कैपिटल्स को जोड़ने के लिए जो प्लान बनाया है, उसमें अभी दो स्टेट कैपिटल्स इम्फाल तथा अगर-तला दिल्ली से नहीं जोड़ी गई है। एस० टी० डी० से हम इन दोनों कैपिटल्स को जोड़ने का प्रयत्न कर रहे हैं। दूसरा, जो डिस्ट्रिक्ट हेडक्वार्टर्स हैं, उनको स्टेट कैपिटल्स से जोड़ने का हम लोगों का विचार है। और तीसरे बम्बई ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: She asked the position only about the various State capitals but you are giving more information. If you give more information, they will ask more questions. If you give more information than required, they will ask some more supplementary questions.

श्री नरहरी प्रसाद सुखदेव सई : और जिले को ...

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: He has only given the position about the State Capitals that have been connected by the STD. But I asked whether those lines are in a working condition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is correct.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: I have also asked what the difficulties are in their working. I also want to know whether the proposal to instal meters at subscribers' places subsists or not. The other thing that I want

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Pratibha Singh.

to know is whether the facility of getting the subscriber's telephone disconnected for the purposes of STD at the State Capitals, is available or not?

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: As regards the functioning of the STD lines are concerned, they are functioning all right. So far as the working of meters is concerned, they are being regularly checked and whenever any complaint is made we look into it and do the needful, and see that if there is any defect it is rectified.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: At the State capitals, a subscriber does not have the facility of getting his telephone disconnected for the purposes of STD as one can have it done in Delhi. By what time will you be able to provide this facility in the various State Capitals? A subscriber in a place like Patna or Bhubaneswar cannot get his telephone disconnected for the purposes of STD. When will you be able to provide this facility in State Capitals?

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: It can be done on demand any time.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: No, it is not done even on demand.

श्री प्रकाश महरोत्रा : मान्यवर, मंत्री जी बार्ड के पात्र हैं क्योंकि प्रायः सभी स्टेट कैपिटल डायरेक्ट कनेक्ट हो रही हैं लेकिन कठिनाई तब उठती है जब आप डाइरेक्ट डायलिंग करते हैं तो अक्सर गलत नम्बर मिल जाता है और मीटर चार्ज हो जाता है। मेरा अपना व्यक्तिगत अनुभव है कि एक क्वार्टर में दो महीने में घर के बाहर था, मकान बन्द था और 17 हजार रुपये एस० टी० डी० का बिल आया जब कि एक महीना ही में घर रहा था। इसके लिए मैंने मंत्री जी को एक पत्र भी दिया है। मेरा सुझाव यह है कि क्या मंत्री जी जैसे इलेक्ट्रीसिटी बोर्ड वाले हर कंज्यूमर के घर में मीटर लगाते हैं तो क्या मंत्री जी भी इस तरीके की व्यवस्था करेंगे कि हर जो

टेलीफोन यूजर है उसके घर में मीटर हो जिससे वह चेक कर सके कि उसका बिल जो आता है वह सही है या नहीं ?

श्री बृजलाल वर्मा : अभी तक ऐसा कोई इन्स्ट्रुमेंट नहीं निकला। अगर निकलेगा तो हम जरूर लगायेंगे।

SHRI B. N. BANERJEE: Sir, is the hon. Minister aware that the subscribers wanting to get STD connection have to wait for a very very long time and that is one of the chief difficulties in STD connections? Is there also a proposal under Government's consideration for reducing charges for STD telephone? Is it not a fact that some people consider that a charge for two calls for every second for STD call to Calcutta or Bombay from Delhi is rather too high? Is the Minister going to reduce the charges?

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: At present, there is no such proposal.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Sir, may I know...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You put the supplementary only.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Yes, Sir, it will be in the form of a supplementary, not in the form of a speech. May I draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister to the tragic fact, the dangerous fact that many of the Members lose their salary and allowances for months together because of telephone bills? Sir, I am a very bad victim of it. I was for one full session, for 100th session, absent and this House was kind enough to grant me leave of absence for sixty days. Even then, because of these STD bills, I got only Rs. 35 as my salary for February and for April, my salary was nil. I made a complaint about it also.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Ten per cent of salary should be used for telephones.

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: If any specific complaint of this type is received by me, I do look into it and give a rebate also.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: I have given two complaints.

श्री श्याम लाल यादव : मैं मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि स्टेट कैपिटल को दिल्ली से कनेक्ट करने की जो व्यवस्था की गई है, उसके लिए कितनी लाईनें रन करती हैं? खास तौर से मैं लखनऊ के बारे में कहना चाहता हूँ। लखनऊ के लिए दिन में एस० टी० डी० मिलना असम्भव है। इसके अलावा जो देश के अग्रतियाँ हैं उनको आने कनेक्ट करने की व्यवस्था की है लेकिन हमारे देश में जो धार्मिक स्थल हैं जहाँ पर देश भर से लोग आते हैं जैसे वाराणसी और प्रयाग हैं इन स्थानों को दूरस्थ स्थानों, शहरों से कनेक्ट करने के लिए क्या आप व्यवस्था करेंगे? और भी बड़े शहर हैं जैसे माला, मदुराई, त्रिवेन्द्रम और बाम्बे हैं, ऐसे स्थानों के लिए भी कनेक्ट करने की व्यवस्था करेंगे, यह चीज मैं आपसे जानना चाहता हूँ?

श्री बृजलाल वर्मा : योजना धीरे धीरे चल रही है और धीरे धीरे हम इन और जा रहे हैं।

श्री श्यामलाल यादव : श्रीमान्, लखनऊ के बारे में ... (*Interruptions*)

श्री बृजलाल वर्मा : लाइन कभी कभी खराब हो जाती है। जब कम्प्लेंट मिलती है तो उसको दुरुस्त कर दिया जाता है।

SHRI V. P. MUNUSAMY: Sir, Pondi-cherry in the capital of the Union Territory and it is gaining international importance because of the Auroville Township which is coming up there and the Aurobindo Ashram which is there. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether STD will be introduced in Pondicherry.

श्री बृजलाल वर्मा : श्रीमि फिलहाल हमारे पास इसका प्रोजेक्ट नहीं है इस आने वाली पंचवर्षीय योजना के अन्तर्गत शायद उस पर विचार किया जा सके।

SHRI PILOO MODY: This question is not going to improve the telephone service.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, every time there is a question concerning the Ministry of Communications, the hon. Minister always stands up and says that if there is a complaint, he will look into it and the Members are supposed to be satisfied. How long does he take to look into a complaint? I have some papers here with me—this happens to be a personal case—which shows that since 1976, October, once a week I have been complaining to the Ministry of Communications for duplication of bills. Sir, if Members do not pay their bills, their salaries are cut. But if the Ministry of Communications does not redress the complaints of the Members, what action should be taken against the Minister of Communications? (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him reply. If you are not prepared to hear, what is the use of putting supplementaries?

SHRI SITARAM KESRI: We have come here not only to hear but to work as well.

श्री बृजलाल वर्मा : सन् 76 के जो उनके बिल्स हैं उनके बारे में अभी जांच चल रही है क्योंकि ये बहुत पुराने हैं। इनकी जांच में करवा रहा हूँ और जल्द से जल्द उसका उत्तर भी मिल जायगा।

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Sir, the hon. Minister is extremely casual in regard to these complaints about the misreading of the metre. I have two

telephones, one given to me by the Lok Sabha when I was the Chairnian of the Privileges Committee, on which STD calls were free, and the other one was a private telephone which was never used for STD. After I ceased to be a Member of the Lok Sabha, I received a bill for Rs. 8,000. I complained to Mr. George Fernandes that it was never used for STD. I had another telephone at the same place which was provided to me free by the Lok Sabha. The reply given was "We have taken up the matter and everything is correct; I regret the inconvenience; you pay Rs. 8,000; otherwise, the telephone that is given to you will be disconnected". Therefore, my question is: If these complaints are genuine—the complaints made by hon. Members are not frivolous complains—are you willing to open up some avenues by which we can go and check up whether the reading of the meters etc. are correct? Otherwise, you give us a verdict and we must accept it as correct.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Sir, these complaints have been there for the last several years; they are not there only now. I made this very complaint about three or four years ago about my own bills. Therefore, I know this malady first-hand. and

I have recently taken up with the Minister in the cases of one or two bills. We are making a searching enquiry into it because there is something seriously wrong about the whole system of accounting. That the Minister ought to recognise.

SHRI PILOO MODY: That is because of the wrong decisions you take.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Who-ever is responsible for it, will have to be punished properly.

SHRI PILOO MODY: AD of them must be punished.

Loss suffered by IISCO

*394. SHRI SITARAM KESRI

SHRIMATI SAROJ KHA-PARDE:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be please[^] to state

(a) whether it is a fact that despite 75 per cent rated capacity utilisation, the Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO) is expected to suffer loss to the tune of Rs. 31 crores during the current year; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and what remedial measures are contemplated by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) It is presumed that the reference is to the financial year, 1977-78 in which the rated capacity utilisation, in terms of saleable steel, was 63.2 per cent, and the estimated loss of the company Rs. 31.29 crores.

(b) The main reasons for the loss-are: —

(i) Heavy interest and depreciation charges amounting to Rs. 21.46 crores;

(ii) Lower production of saleable steel, because of adverse industrial relations;

(iii) Lower production of cast iron spun pipes, because of fall in demand; and

(iv) Higher consumption of coke as well as stores and spares.

†The question was actually asked in the floor of the House by Shri Sitaram Kesri.