

Our good friend, the Secretary of the Department of Communications, Mr. Shinoi—though I did not want to name him I am pained to do so—has put the entire public of this country to colossal inconvenience ...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): If you can avoid the names of officers, it would be better.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: I will avoid wherever possible. But here it is very important.

SHRI S. CHANDRASEKHARAN (Kerala). Why do you not do it in the party meeting?

AN HON'BLE MEMBER: He has already named it.

SHRI S. W. DHABE (Maharashtra): He was not the Secretary at that time.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: I am coming to it. When this collaboration agreement was being signed Mr. Jain was the Secretary of the Department and the present Secretary was the General Manager of the Indian Telephone Industries, Bangalore. This industry is located in the State of our good friend, Mr. Mulka Govinda Reddy. Mr. Vasudevan was the Director, Telecommunication Research Centre.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): Why do you go into the individual officers?

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: Because it is very important.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): You can continue with the speech.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: I will continue. It is very important. At that time Mr. Vasudevan favoured this. As a reward for it he is with the World Bank I.D.A. holding a cosy job. He got this job due to the I.T.T. of U.S.A. He was also very favourable to the penta conta cross-bar system. And ultimately, thanks to the service rendered to the cross bar, he got this job in the World Bank. Here is the proof. If you allow me to lay it on the

Table of the House I will do so. I am quoting:—

"INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

1818 H Street N. W. Washington 35 D.C.
Telephone Executive June 21, 1973

TECHNICAL DATA

PROCUREMENT: up to \$ 12.0 million may be procured through negotiated purchase in the interest of system standardization:..."

What is this? This is all to favour cross-bar. Because he favoured cross-bar he got a cosy job there killing us here. Could you not call for tenders? Could you not go in for global tenders? No. He says this was the Commitment and he could not help it.

The present Secretary appeared before the Public Undertakings Committee. In the 34th Report of the Public Undertakings Committee the Secretary, Mr. Shinoi, gave evidence. He said:—

"But I remember that the collaboration agreement was raised, the question of compensation was discussed at great length and it was finally decided not to include any penalty clause in the agreement."

As General Manager, I.T.I., Bangalore, he was there in the collaboration agreement, a party to it. He stated this before the Financial Committee of Parliament, that is, the Public Undertakings Committee. Do you mean to say that those who rise high in life should not point out discrepancies? Mr. Shenoy said "I remember that it was discussed at great length and it was not included." It is just funny. The damage it has caused to the country is colossal. You cannot imagine. If I say something you will say that I am saying for myself, that it is my own story. It appears to me that not to include penalty clause was purposely planned, well in advance, by B.T.M. with connivance of I.T.I. Management. Mr. Shinoi was General Manager at that time. This planning was meant to prolong the imports from B.T.M. The magnitude of import after the 36th month of the agreement is indicative of the financial

[Shri Kameshwar Singh] advantage which the firm B.T.M. got at the cost of the nation in which the most precious foreign exchange was drained. Therefore, this fact necessitates even more the C.B.I. probe. In the beginning, I will tell you about a small loss which was in 1971-72. The Public Accounts Committee pointed out that there was a recurring loss of Rs. 36 lakhs per year due to mal-functioning and under-capacity working of the Cross-Bar Exchange at Bombay. It is for one exchange only. The loss suffered by the Chanakyapuri Exchange was to the tune of Rs. 10 million. The losses suffered by the nation on account of the other cross-bar exchanges, on their maintenance and also in terms of the inconvenience caused to the people, will be enormous. It will be in astronomical figures. I am a layman and I cannot quote these figures. *Time bell rings*) Sir, this is my maiden speech, and the convention is that you should not ring the bell till I finish.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): I do not think this is your maiden speech.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: To-day it is his maiden speech.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: You can check from the records of the House. I have never made any speech. You should allow me to speak uninterrupted.

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI: On communications, it is his maiden speech.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): Please try to conclude.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: I will finish soon. There is no problem. I had just now congratulated our technicians who have produced electric typewriters. But I will place before you a statement of the Secretary of the Department and show how derogatory it is to the Indian engineers and technicians. In the 34th Report of the Public Undertakings Committee 1972-73, on page 22, the Secretary of the Ministry is quoted as saying in his evidence before the Committee that "even if technicians had gone into the case in greater detail, they would not have been able to find out this technical defect unless these equipments work actually under these traffic conditions". The periodicity

of calls given to the B.T.M. people was never enquired into. It was not on the actual basis. It was based on the Strowger system. It was never enquired into. This is also given in the article "Telephone Muddle" as published in the *Financial Express*. How derogatory it is to the Indian technicians! You say, they will not know! You have not gone into details. You have not asked anybody. You say, our boys do not know about it. And, Sir, he is a technocrat. He is the first technocrat to be the Secretary. Mr. Jain was not a technocrat. So, you don't go into the periodicity calls properly. And you say the system will work.

Sir, I am coming to a very interesting part. It is not my story. It is the Department's story. Actually, Sir, this Secretary of the Department is trying to see, to the best of his ability, that Ministers are proved to be a failure and that the policy of the Government is not implemented. That is his sole desire because he is committed to the common control of the B.T.M. of Belgium and the I.T.T. of the U.S.A. He cannot help it. He said in the same report, i.e. 34th Report, on page 22, that the defects have been rectified. Now, I will quote from the Performance Budget of the Department of Communications this year. On page 7, in the Telecommunications Research Centre budget, 1975-76, they have asked for plenty of money. It reads: "Implementation in production of solutions to reduce the fault rate in cross-bar system". At one place, he has said that everything has been rectified. Now, what for have they asked money here? It is public money. It comes from taxation. The poor people pay it. At one place, he says "it is completely okay, there is no difficulty" and gives the green signal. And here he asks for money to rectify defects. It is not my story. It is from the Performance Budget of the Department. Why? Because they have been trying to hide things and at the same time, they ask for public money to do as they like.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): Kindly make your last point.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: I will take a few minutes more.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): No, no.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: This is my maiden speech. You check from the proceedings of the House.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): That is all right.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: It is the convention here and even abroad, in the House of Commons, in the British Parliament, that a Member should not be disturbed when he is making his maiden speech. Actually he should be allowed to read. I am not reading. I am just mentioning the points.

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI: Please allow the maiden to continue.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: At least, on that account, you should allow me.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): There are a good number of speakers

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: Anyway he has not called me a virgin, which I cannot be.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): You please co-operate and make your last point.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: At the same time the Chairman of the Indian Telephone Industries—at that time Shri Gupta was there—said in the same Thirty-fourth Report of the Public Undertakings Committee that it was slightly premature to say whether it will work to their entire satisfaction.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): You are reading all the extracts of all the reports.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: I am showing how they misguided the House and misguided the nation. They should be punished for this.

After the faults were detected in the Cross-bar system Shri Shenoy was appointed as Director Telecommunications

Research Centre Delhi and as one-man technical committee to go into the defects. This was when he was Director. Telecommunications. The Secretary was committed to the system religiously and sentimentally because at one stage his son got employed in BTM, Belgium. I am pained to see all these things on the Floor of the House. He gave a clean hit to the Cross-bar system and because of that Shri Jain gave him out-of-turn promotion which helped him to become Secretary of the Department superseding senior and efficient people. It is very sad. Anyway these things are taking place.

I will now point out to you something which you cannot imagine. It is very difficult to imagine, though it is a fact of life

In our country the I.T.T. of which BTM is a subsidiary has planned and acted in most sophisticated manner to create a complete chaotic condition in the vital field of tele-communications, which has an important role to play in the development of the Nation. Shri L. K. Jha was heading a committee in the United Nations—a 20 man committee of experts. Why? This was because the growing suspicion about the motives and methods of big multi-national companies whose operations provoked alarm, led to an enquiry by a U.N. Committee of 20 experts in which Shri L. K. Jha held the highest position. They also found out that I.T.T. of which B.T.M. is a subsidiary was in league with C.I.A. which was involved in the Chilean coup and Water-gate scandal. They have successfully created most chaotic conditions in the Tele-communication system in our country. To substantiate my statement, I will refer you to the Times of India of 12th May front page news which says: "C.I.A. using U.S. firms abroad as cover". This shows that the point I have mentioned is not wrong. What are we doing about it?

Mr. Vice-Chairman, I will tell you how in paper they misguide the politicians. A system selection Committee was set up in 1973 to select a system to be manufactured at Rai Bareilly. Its recommendations were set aside by the Secretary who, I said, is the first technocrat to hold that office. He recommended the manufacture

[Shri Kameshwar Singh]
 of I.T.T. cross-bar, for the upgradation of which a task force was set up. Due to disagreement in the selection committee, the matter was referred to the Department of Electronics. Though they had no expertise in the field of tele-communication. They are making good progress in the field of electronic telephone exchange which is very good at the same time expensive for our country. Well, it is an advancement in science and technology and I welcome that and we must go in for that. But, definitely for this, Sir, we do not have the expertise. Earlier, my friend, Shri Mathur, quoted Mr. Menon and his views on the Cross-bar System. When it was referred to the Department of Electronics, the recommendation of the Department of Electronics was for the manufacture of one lakh lines of Strowger system of 1880 vintage, but without the Common Control and for the balance of two lakh lines, the Department of Electronics recommended a study of all the systems. And, Sir, this paper was supposed to be referred to the Cabinet, no other body than the Union Cabinet, Sir, for consideration. But what happened to the recommendation of the Department of Electronics? The paper to the Cabinet, however, restricted the study to equipment without Common Control. Only later, Sir, it was made out departmentally that it was for the Cross-bar only. Now, you can think that the recommendation of the Department of Electronics is something and it has to go to the Minister and, ultimately, it has to go to the Cabinet. But our good friend, the Secretary, makes some changes and says that it is for a system without the Common Control only. That means that referring the matter to the Department of Electronics was just only an eye-wash. You see, it is just like patting the baby a little to make him do what we want. You have to please somebody and some bungling has to be done. Sir, this is how the Secretaries are dealing with the Ministers and I do not know how they take it. I do not know how it is tolerated at all. How are such people tolerated? This man should be suspended and inquiries must be instituted against him. These are all the bungs which he has committed. I would like to have a very clear

and specific answer from the honourable Minister as to whether what I have said is wrong. I would like him to contradict me on each and every point that I have made and I would like him to correct me if I am wrong. I want to be corrected and it is not as if I do not want to be corrected if I am proved wrong. I am prepared to say, if I am proved wrong, that I am sorry for this on the floor of this House. I am prepared to say 'sorry'.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): How many more minutes do you want?

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: Sir, this is my maiden speech.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): That is all right. How many more minutes do you want? Otherwise, the other speakers will be deprived of their time.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: Sir, I will take two more minutes.

Now, Sir, these are the problems. How are they attempting to solve the problem? Does the Ministry know the real problem or are the Ministry people attempting at a solution through the process of trial and error? In my opinion, Sir, the real problem is the low telephone density and all the troubles that we are facing are the outcome of this situation. There is a big gap between demand and supply of telephones and also between the calling rates and the call-handling capacity of the equipment. This I have already mentioned. Now, Sir, I would like to submit as to what action the Minister should take to solve the problem.

Sir, the solution to the problem is, therefore, to introduce a system which is quick to manufacture and cheap, that is, to produce the maximum in the shortest possible time and within the availability of funds. The Ministry should, therefore, go out in the world and search for a system which meets these criteria. There is no time to waste and there is no time also for any process of trial and error. Sir, I am not speaking because I want to speak. Even the Department of Electronics recommended that all the systems should be studied. I do not know why this has not been done and what prevents

us or which factor hinders us or deters us from studying all the systems in the world. We must find a system which is efficient and which is quick to manufacture and which takes a little time only for installation.

Sir, I have already stated that there is a big gap between the rate of calling and the call-handling capacity. I am consciously hinting at the notorious pentaconta Cross-bar and its Common Control. I know that no practical size Common Control can handle big and highly turbulent traffic rate which is generated due to extremely low telephone density. Until such time as the telephone density becomes normal, this Common Control will not be able to cope with the traffic.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): Come to the last point.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: Yes. Sir. I am finishing. The step to be taken is, in my opinion, to introduce a system which is capable of quick manufacture and easy installation. Do not think of common control and other sophistications till the telephone density becomes normal.

If the answer to problem are so clear to a layman like me, why then are the experts not thinking on these lines? Why the big bosses in the Department fail to realise this? The officials at the helm of affairs are those who initially made the mistake of choosing pentaconta common control and today their false prestige or emotion has overtaken their technical judgment and competence. It is completely clouded. They are sentimentally attached. There is a hierarchy of technical inefficiency being perpetuated by vested interests. Mr. Vasudevan and Mr. Jain, the then Secretary, non-technical man who were men to select cross bar with Mr. Shenoi, the other technical man, lifted Mr. Shenoi to become the Secretary out of turn. Mr. Shenoi in turn has suggested out of turn promotions to some of his yesmen—Mr. Kinny, at present abroad; Mr. C S S Rao, General Manager, I.T.I., Bangalore; Mr. R. S. Subramanian, Director, Tele-Communications Research Centre, Delhi—so that after his retirement these people can shield him. This

is horrible. The present Secretary is going to retire very shortly. He has made out-of-turn promotions.

Now I would conclude by saying that I warn, through you, Sir, that our hon. Minister of Communications, Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma, faces a danger, I am also facing the same danger. As I have made these points clear, he, Mr. Shenoy along with his friends the I.T.T. of U.S.A. may be taking action to bump us off, in collusion with the I.T.T. of U.S.A. and Chilian coup fame, anywhere. We may become the victims—myself and Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma—of a cold-blooded murder. If anything happens to us, he should be held responsible for that. Sir, I am giving you the warning: Our lives are in danger. We could be victims of a cold-blooded murder. Sir, and nobody will know about it also.

श्री सीता राम सिंह (बिहार) :
श्रीमन्, उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, संचार व्यवस्था के उपर बोलने से पहले मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि

लेकर नष्टर हाथ में जगाहते कहा
रग-रग मे दर्द है लगाऊँ कहाँ-कहाँ ।

चाहे संचार व्यवस्था हो, चाहे रेल व्यवस्था हो, वित्त व्यवस्था हो या कृषि व्यवस्था हो तमाम व्यवस्थाओं में गड़बड़ी है, पक्षपात है, भ्रष्टाचार है और कुप्रवृत्ति है। मैं आपकी आज्ञा से मदन का ध्यान खींचना चाहूँगा और कहना चाहूँगा कि टेलिफोन की व्यवस्था दिन पर दिन सारे देश में खराब होती जा रही है, बिगड़ती जा रही है। टेलिफोन का रोज-रोज खराब होना, टेलिफोन करते समय काफी शोर-गुल होना, टेलिफोन करते वक्त टेलिफोन का कट जाना या बात करते वक्त बीच में ही तीसरे व्यक्ति का लाइन में लगना आदि टेलिफोन विभाग में भयंकर कुव्यवस्था है।

[श्री सीता राम सिंह]

क्रासबार की खरीद के समय माननीय बहुगुणा जी संचार विभाग के मंत्री थे। उस समय इस की खरीद में काफी घोटाला हुआ। यह बहुचर्चित विषय है।

हिन्दी डायरेक्टरी के संबंध में श्रीमन् इस को लोकप्रिय बनाने के लिये एक कमेटी बनी थी। लेकिन दो वर्ष से भी ज्यादा हो गए इस कमेटी की अभी तक बैठक नहीं हुई। सिर्फ कागज में कमेटी बनी है लोगों की आंखों में धूल झोकने के लिए। लोग समझे कि सरकार कुछ कर रही है। लेकिन उस कमेटी की कभी बैठक नहीं हुई। साल भर में दो बार डायरेक्टरी छपती है।

माननीय सदस्य : अब तो वह छपनी भी बंद हो गई है।

श्री सीता राम सिंह : अभी हमारे एक भाई ने बताया कि यह छपनी भी बंद हो गई। जो डायरेक्टरी छपती है वह पहले अंग्रेजी में छपती है और जब अंग्रेजी में लोगों को मिल जाती है तब हिन्दी डायरेक्टरी की उपयोगिता नहीं समझी जाती है। एक तरफ आप लोग विश्व हिन्दी सम्मेलन करते हैं, विदेशी लोगों को हिन्दी सिखाते हैं, लेकिन दूसरी तरफ हमारे देश में अंग्रेजी चलती है। इस प्रकार की विडम्बना हमारे देश में चल रही है।

4 P.M.

संचार मंत्रालय में उपमंत्री (श्री जगन्नाथ पहाडिया) : यह सूचना आपको गलत दी गई है। डायरेक्टरी हिन्दी और अंग्रेजी दोनों भाषाओं में छपती है।

श्री सीता राम सिंह : दोनों भाषाओं में तो छपती है, लेकिन कब छपती है। पहले अंग्रेजी की डायरेक्टरी आ जाती

है और उसके बाद हिन्दी में आती है। मैं आपका ध्यान इस तरफ भी दिलाना चाहता हूं कि बम्बई के जनरल मैनेजर टेलीफोन रेड्डी सहाब हैं उनके भ्रष्टाचार के बारे में काफी बातें छापी हैं, लेकिन केन्द्र के कुछ मंत्री उनको बचाते हैं और संरक्षण प्रदान करते हैं। यही कारण है कि उनका आज तक कुछ नहीं हुआ है। इसलिए मैं माननीय संचार मंत्री से चाहूंगा कि वह इस सदन को आश्वस्त करें कि वे इस मामले की जांच-पड़ताल कराएंगे और जो व्यक्ति दोषी पाया जाय उसको दण्डित करें।

श्रीमन् डाक-तार विभाग के बारे में मैं कुछ उद्धरण देना चाहूंगा। एक वर्ष पहले हमारे एक मित्र ने तार दिया और वह तार राजस्थान से दिया गया तो वह तार एक साल के बाद मिला। इसी तरह से हमारे बिहार में वैशाली जिले के महुवा नामक स्थान में सन् 1971 में टेलीफोन की व्यवस्था की गई थी, लेकिन अब इसकी व्यवस्था बिल्कुल खराब है। लगभग 40 लोगों ने कनेक्शन लिये थे, लेकिन अब वे लोग कनेक्शन काट रहे हैं क्योंकि टेलीफोन ठीक प्रकार से काम नहीं करते हैं। स्वयं मेरे घर में टेलीफोन लगा हुआ है, लेकिन वह कभी काम नहीं करता है। केवल-मात्र गोभा और नुमाइन के लिए रखा हुआ है। इस तरह की स्थिति वहां पर चल रही है। माननीय श्री सत्यनारायण सिंह जी जब इस विभाग के मंत्री थे तो उस वक्त से आज तक हम बराबर पत्र लिखते रहे हैं और वर्तमान संचार मंत्री को भी लिख चुके हैं कि हमारे यहां एक बहुत बड़ा पोस्ट आफिस है जो किराये के मकान में चल रहा है। वह किराये के मकान में इसलिए चल रहा है कि पोस्ट आफिस का मकान सरकार के लिए पड़ा हुआ

है। मैं समझता हूँ कि मरम्मत पर जितना खर्च होगा उससे बहुत ज्यादा पैसा यानी कई गुना पैसा किराये के रूप में खर्च किया जा चुका है। इसकी जाँच भी चल रही है और वह स्थान सुरक्षित भी नहीं है। इस संबंध में जब पत्र लिखा जाता है तो मंत्री महोदय की तरफ से पुराना पिटा-पिटाया उत्तर भेज दिया जाता है और संचार मंत्री का जवाब आ जाता है कि वित्तीय संकट के कारण मरम्मत नहीं की जा सकती है। इस प्रकार से मरम्मत से कई गुना किराया दिया जा चुका है, लेकिन मरम्मत नहीं की जा रही है। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह बड़ी नागुक स्थिति है और इस विभाग का काम मुद्दा रूप में नहीं हो रहा है। पोस्ट आफिसों में जब चिट्ठिया इकट्ठी हो जाती हैं तो उनको आग लगा दी जाती है और जनता की बहुत बड़ी क्षति हो जाती है। चिट्ठिया और तार कभी भी निश्चित समय पर नहीं मिलते हैं और इस कारण से जनता का बहुत नुकसान होता है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि वे इस संबंध में जाँच करने के लिए एक जाँच आयोग बैठायें और जिन लोगों की इस प्रकार की देरी से क्षति हुई है उनकी क्षतिपूर्ति करें। जब सरकार जनता को सहूलियत नहीं दे सकती तो जनता से टैक्स लेने की बात कैसे कर सकती है? अब मैं संचार मंत्री से अदब के साथ यह कहना चाहूँ कि अगर वे संचार के माध्यमों में चल रही देरी और विलम्ब को दूर नहीं कर पाएँ तो मन्त्रालय इस विभाग से इस्तीफा दें और अपने ऊपर इस प्रकार का कलंक न रखें। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं अपना भाषण समाप्त करता हूँ।

SHRI S. W. DHABE (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, we are having a good discussion on the Report and some of the salient points on which I would like to emphasise are with regard to the postal service and the telephone service to the subscribers. Sir, if the postal service has to be improved, it is not merely necessary that more post offices are opened in villages but it is necessary to see how quickly the letters and parcels are delivered. In this connection, it is more surprising that the Department thought it fit to discontinue the night air mail service. It was introduced by Rafi Ahmed Kidwai some time in 1953, and for no reason, it was discontinued from 1970 or so. Sir, that service was efficiently run for the four metropolitan cities, and we used to get our letters the next day morning either from Madras or Calcutta or Bombay. There is a general demand from newspapers, for this service at least from the area from which I come. With the stoppage of this service, tremendous delay is caused. Sir, in this connection, I would like to refer to the Annual Report for the year 1973-74. At page 3, it has been said that the Indian Airlines Corporation carried 78 lakh kgs. of mail, a decrease of 25 lakh kgs. of mail over the past year. Sir, one of the reasons given to us for the stoppage of this service was that the Communications Department was not ready to increase the freight charges. The Indian Airlines Corporation wanted more freight charges because their expenses have increased, and the Postal Department was not ready to increase the freight charges because it thought that it was unwise to spend more money for the quick disposal of the postal dak. Sir, I plead with the Ministry that instead of having extra services which they want to introduce they should reconsider this night air mail service. What was the economics of the night air mail service which was started by Rafi Ahmed Kidwai and was successful for about 17 years, and what better benefit are they going to have if any other service is introduced? Sir, I for one feel that it was a mistake, it was a blunder of the Postal Department that they discontinued this service. Sir, the postal service requires efficient and quick disposal of letters and parcels. From that

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point of view, the Ministry should reconsider the decision and re-start the night air mail service, if necessary by paying more money to the Indian Airlines. It clearly shows that the Indian Airlines is not ready to lift the letters and parcels unless the freight rates are revised. If that is the case, the Department can certainly revise the rates and see that this service becomes effective.

Sir, there are two more things which peep out from this Report. There is a general complaint about the inefficient telephone service. The new rules introduced are so arbitrary and harsh that they can disconnect the telephone by giving the notice on the telephone that 'your telephone bill is not paid and so, your telephone gets disconnected'. Sir, it has been held by the highest court of this land that even for administrative action which results in serious civil consequences, a reasonable opportunity has to be given. In the Bombay High Court at Nagpur a number of citizens have filed writ petitions and the action of the Department is stayed. I would like the Minister to consider the question of giving a notice to the subscribers before ordering disconnection. And, Sir, what are the rules for re-connection? You are to pay the entire deposit and then alone you can get the re-connection. Under these circumstances, will it not be proper for the Department to give a reasonable written notice to the subscribers before commencing disconnection proceedings?

Now, coming to phonogram service, previously we used to get a copy of the telegram sent over telephone. Now they do not supply us a copy of the phonogram. They ask us to pay something extra for the copy and then only they would send us a copy. Sir, many mistakes occur in these telegrams and sometimes even wrong bills are sent. Therefore, this system which was prevalent previously under which a copy of the phonogram was sent to the subscriber should be restored and subscribers should be given this facility.

Some Members have stated that the telephone system is not functioning efficiently and that for many many days the telephones remain dead. What is the

Department doing about it? Sir, we pay for the service. But, if the service is not rendered, there is no question of charging the subscribers. It is not a commercial department. Even if it were a commercial department, if the service is not rendered, how can they charge the rent from subscribers? I suggest, Sir, that they should consider a pro-rata system under which whenever the telephone does not function or is dead, the subscriber should not be charged any rent, for the period, by the Telephone Department. They may take some action against the staff but subscribers certainly cannot be penalised for no service given by the Telephone Department.

Now, coming to industrial relations, I do not agree with the criticism levelled by the friends on the other side that it was Mr. Bahuguna, when he was a Minister then, who broke the national union. It is entirely a wrong statement. In fact, when he was the Minister here he worked very well and did some good things and gave some amenities to the working class. If any union breaks, it breaks on account of its own internal dissension and under its own weight. If it was a national union for such a long time and a strong union, it is ridiculous to say that because the employer was against it, it has broken. It is the experience in trade union movements that whenever an employer is against the trade union, it grows, whenever there is a clash, whenever there is a strike, whenever there are agitations, the trade union does not break; on the other hand, whenever the management is against a union, it becomes stronger. Therefore, to make a statement, a bald statement, that because Bahuguna was anti-employees and anti-trade unions, he broke the national union. In my opinion, Sir, it is entirely an incorrect a wrong statement. And, what are they doing in Tamil Nadu State? There, they have started DMK unions of their own sections. They have now started many centres and Labour Department interferes to give recognition only to D.M.K. unions. Those people, belonging to that party, cannot complain that any such things are being thrust upon them.

Sir, it is high time that the Government should reconsider its wage policy.

They are on a volcano. They cannot say that departmental employees numbering about 3 lakhs in P. & T. and about 3½ lakhs in the Railways, will work on contingencies and a pay of Rs. 50 per month. Rs. 5 is the minimum wage prescribed even in the lowest industry in any part of the country. They should, at least, be given some service conditions and a minimum pay of Rs. 150 per month. I do not agree that Rs. 100 is the minimum wage that can be paid. How can any employee subsist on this amount? This is one of the reasons for the corruption in the Department. Proper service conditions, proper pay and security of service are very essential pre-requisites for any efficient running of the service. I, therefore, appeal to the Minister to reconsider the whole question of wage structure in the Postal Department and remove this anomaly, the lowest class of employees who are unreasonably lowest paid. They must be paid properly in order to make the services efficient, particularly when they are working in rural areas. Sir, the statement made in the P. & T. Report about industrial relations in the department is very funny. On the one hand we are talking of national unions. But see page 7 where it has been stated:—

“Staff Relations

The relations between the Administration and the staff remained cordial. Periodical meetings were held at various levels with the representatives of the two federations, their affiliated unions and recognised non-federated unions, in addition to the two meetings of the Departmental Council of the Joint Consultative Machinery”.

I could not understand this policy of the Government. You have recognised non-federated unions. When we have got national federations, it is the duty of the unions to join one federation or the other. But the policy of recognising craft unions is entirely wrong. I do not know what type of union it is but I am told it is a craft union. Therefore, the Board should reconsider the problem of industrial relations in order to have a better industrial climate.

The last point I have to submit is that the Communications Ministry's Report is very scrappy. Indian Telephone Indus-

tries of Bangalore figures between pages 21 and 28 of the Report and it has been stated therein that they have given a dividend of 12 per cent. I do not know how a dividend of 12 per cent. has been given when there is a restriction—there is an Act—for paying not more than six per cent. dividend. But the Report itself is a scrappy report. It is not clear whether they have given bonus to the employees while they have declared a dividend of 12 per cent. It is also not clear, when they have said that they have arrived at a five-year agreement in these two industries, Indian Telephone Industries, Bangalore and Hindustan Teleprinters Limited, Madras, what the terms and conditions of that agreement are. The Report should give complete information. With this sort of report it will be very difficult to know what the terms and conditions of the five-year agreement are.

On page 32 it is stated:—

“Industrial relations in the company continued to be cordial during the year. A mutually acceptable new wage settlement with retrospective effect from 1-9-1973 and valid up to 29th March, 1977 was arrived at and the new agreement was signed on 17-4-1974. This agreement has been approved by the Government.”

But it is not clear what the terms of the agreement are. If under the terms of the agreement the departmental employees who are paid only Rs. 50 per month are excluded—if they do not come under the purview of this agreement—then I say, social justice has been denied to the last cadre of employees in this concern. I would appeal to the hon. Minister to give a detailed report so that the agreement is also placed before Parliament and we could know what sort of agreements are arrived at.

I feel that in order to improve efficiency, it is very essential that workers' participation is accepted. If it is accepted, it will give a boost and improve the services which is very essential media for national integration.

DR K. MATHEW KURIAN (Kerala): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the Posts and Telegraphs Department is a glaring example of bad management and top

[Dr. K. Mathew Kurian]

level inefficiency apart from unfair labour practices. Sir, I am afraid that even the Administrative Reports given to us are such shabby documents that it is difficult to make out what is really the state of affairs in the P. & T. Department. I would therefore like to go into some depth about the actual functioning of the P. & T. Department.

Unfortunately, the top management of the P. & T. Department is inefficient mainly because it has a pantheon of senior officers in the P. & T. Board on the one hand and, on the other, we have got Ministers in charge of the subjects who have, in fact, treated their portfolios as half-way-houses between Chief Ministership and Home Ministership. So, you find one after the other Ministers coming and going, becoming Chief Minister or the Home Minister and the P. & T. Department has been left high and dry without any proper leadership. The result is that the real management has been held in the hands of bureaucrats who have very little idea about what the employees really aspire for. Of course, this does not mean that the Ministers understand it any better but at least the Ministers are peoples' representatives unlike the bureaucrats who are not expected to have any knowledge of the aspirations of the employees or the public in general. Recently, for example, the P. & T. Department was divided at a singular level into two wings—postal and communications. This was definitely discounted by the Administrative Reforms Commission and I also find that the ratio between officers and staff very clearly shows that there is multiplication of strength at the officers level while at the staff level, at various places, there is increase in workload. Increasing workload for the P. and T. employees at the lower level on the one hand and multiplication of senior officers at the top level has been the phenomenon during the last one or two years. If the services are bad, which is a general complaint, then the responsibility should be squarely placed at the top level of management. Sir, inadequacy of staff, chronic imbalance in service conditions, lack of accommodation, amenities and even stationery articles which go into the production of various items of the P. & T.

services, all these have contributed to delays and deficiencies in the department. On the contrary if you really make a scientific assessment, the workload on the employees has increased; they have contributed more per hour of work than in the past.

Sir, the main difficulty that I find in the management at the top level is the inability of the P. and T. Board to take the employees into confidence and to give them a sense of participation in the affairs of management. If such an attitude is created, I am sure the P. and T. employees will definitely dedicate themselves to the task of improving the services and improving the efficiency of the department.

Sir, the Public Accounts Committee has made very strong statements regarding lack of efficiency and inordinate delays in the execution of projects by the P. and T. Department. The Committee has expressed the view that the delays have been mainly due to lack of co-ordination between the units of the department, defective terms of contracts and absence of proper planning. Therefore, the whole responsibility for inefficiency as pointed out by the Public Accounts Committee should be squarely placed at the level of the top management. The Committee also says that as a result of this the project cost has gone up, precious stocks have remained unused and foreign exchange has been spent unjudiciously. The report further states, to quote, "the Committee is surprised that the P. and T. Department despite four successive Five Year Plans have not acquired maximum of planning in so far as the execution of their projects is concerned." The impression that has fallen on the mind of the Committee is that the department has executed its schemes without any basic planning. Sir, I would only like to point out that in the 143rd Report of the Public Accounts Committee 1974-75, there is a reference to serious deficiencies so far as stores accounting in the engineering division in Orissa Circle is concerned. This is only one example about one item to show that there are serious deficiencies at the high level management in the P. and T. Department.

Sir, the 'express delivery' system, a facility which was available on Sundays and holidays, has been recently abolished. This has caused inconvenience to the public and the staff who had to be retrenched and the new system of 'recorded delivery' has proved to be a flop.

Sir, the all-up scheme of R. A. Kidwai has been given up. Now Air Marshal Lal is dictating terms to the Postal Department and the public suffers in between. Sir, the enormous investments that have been made for purchase of sophisticated equipment from foreign firms has become a mammoth white elephant; the beneficiaries are only the top officers and the businessmen who avail of specialised services for minimum fee. Bulk of the engineers in the Telecommunication Wing, as my information goes, do mostly clerical nature of work. This is because of lack of implementing proper schemes of self-reliance using our technical skill to produce goods rather than relying on foreign collaboration.

Sir, as I have said earlier, the workload on the employees has increased. Very often employees are blamed because of overtime payments. Sir, unlike in many other Departments, in the P&T Department work-loads are calculated on the basis of the average; there are not enough leave reserves, and as a result there is accumulation of work whenever there is certain amount of absenteeism. The top management is manipulating with the entire system of over-time payment in order to reduce cost. If regular employees were recruited, then the usual benefits of provident fund, gratuity and certain other service benefits would accrue to them and the cost would go up. Therefore, the top management is deliberately doing this, but they put the blame on the employees that so much of OTA is being paid. In the absence of leave reserves, you find the same employees have to do over-time in order to complete the service which is of utility nature.

Sir, the second point I would like to emphasise is that in the entire P&T Department the labour policy is rotten. Sir, the labour policy is one which is anti-labour and anti-employee. Sir, the Department has been dabbling in trade union

politics. They have deliberately promoted scab unions who have very little strength among the employees. Sir, certain unions which support the Government are deliberately created as a baby of the Department; while 75 to 90 per cent of the employees may be in another union that is de-recognised and a scab union is promoted. I can say this particularly of the earlier Minister. I have no knowledge of the existing Minister, but I am afraid according to facts available with me, even Dr. Sharma is treading the wrong steps of Bahuguna and I would not be surprised if Dr. S. D. Sharma gets into difficulties despite his CIA phobia.

In Madhya Pradesh Circle, with regard to Postal Service Class IV, there was a conference in December, 1974 and they requisitioned for an official observer. A person was named, but he did not turn up. Subsequently, a telegram was issued informing the management that the officer concerned had not turned up. Despite this, no action has been taken. Sir, I understand the opposite group has been recognised. There is double standard policy in the Department, that democratically elected unions are being de-recognised and scab unions are created by the Department. I can say this at least of the earlier Minister. I am not absolutely sure of the present Minister.

Sir, the third point I would like to bring to your notice is that if inefficiency or lack of proper services exists in the P&T, the responsibility should again be squarely placed on the doors of the P&T Department because this Department follows a policy of victimisation against the employees on a large scale. Sir, the Minister of Railways has declared on the floor of the Parliament in March, 1975 that break in service against all strike participants will be condoned, except in cases where charges of violences have been proved. In Parliament, the Railway Minister gave certain assurances. But, according to the brief prepared by the Ministry of Communications, the Railway Minister's policy regarding, reinstatement of workers and condonation of break in service in the Railways will not apply in the case of the P&T Department.

[Dr. K. Mathew Kurian]

What are the facts? Let me give only a few examples. In Kerala there are 16 employees who are still under suspension because of the strike of May 10 to 12, 1974. Services of 18 persons have been terminated out of which only two persons have been reinstated. The number of employees who have been transferred as a punitive measure comes to 65. The number of people in Kerala in the P&T Department who have suffered break in service comes to staggering figure of 2019 and disciplinary proceedings are going on against 17 employees. Sir, in West Bengal, there are 12 employees who have been transferred as a punishment. 2,389 persons are suffering because of break in service. This is true in the case of postal services. In the case of telecommunication circle in Kerala alone, 14 employees have been suspended; termination cases are 65 out of which only 62 have been reinstated. Punishment by transfer has been in the case of 53 persons and there are 1188 cases of break in service. In West Bengal, in the telecommunication division alone, there are 297 cases of break in service. There has been a recent case of a High Court decision by the Kerala High Court which said that Comrade N. P. Padmanabham, Secretary, NFPT Kerala Circle should be reinstated who was dismissed earlier by the Government but I understand that instead of honouring the verdict of the High Court, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma's Ministry is trying to go in appeal. When the High Court gives justice, that justice is being denied in the name of appeal to the Supreme Court.

I do not want to go into details but I would only like to show that in July 1973, recognition of the Kerala Circle Union of the All-India Telegraph Engineering Employees Class III was withdrawn by the P.M.G. Trivandrum. This union retains more than 75 per cent of Class III employees in that wing. Recognition was on the other hand granted to a rival group which has only a very insignificant membership. I would like to know from Dr. S. D. Sharma why this partiality towards the scab union created by his own party-men. I would like to know whether he is aware that All India P&T Administrative Employees Association which held its conference in Cochin, which was at-

tended by me and attended by the hon. Member Mr. Lakshmanan, elected a committee democratically. One delegate walks out, discusses with some people very close to the Government and floats a parallel list of executive committee members and I understand that Dr. Sharma's Ministry is favourably inclined to give recognition to that.

Sir, in West Bengal and in Kerala large-scale transfers are taking place. Suspension and D.I.R. cases in Kerala are still pending. I would like the hon. Minister to give an assurance that his department will not follow any longer this anti-labour policy of victimisation. Sir, I demand that all cases of D.I.R., all suspension cases, all transfers as punishment, should be reviewed immediately so that a healthy normal trade union functioning is possible and healthy management-labour relationship is established in the P&T Department (*Time bell rings*) Sir, I will take only a few minutes. Sir, I only want to add a few points: I am the President of the P&T Employees Union in Kerala and therefore I would take a few minutes more.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): You just mention them.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: Sir, the pay-scales of the postmen, linemen, and a number of other categories are too low. The service conditions in the R.M.S. running sections are totally bad. Even elementary amenities are lacking. In the end, I would like to draw your attention to one of the most glaring facts of the P and T employees' life, i.e. the life of what is called the extra departmental agent. Today he is one of the important elements in the P and T Department. According to the administrative report, the strength of the staff on the rolls of the department as on 31st March, 1974 was 6,29,275, including 2,08,938 extra departmental agents. The EDAs are a heritage of the colonial rule. The colonial masters introduced this system and Dr. S. D. Sharma even today is treading in the path of the colonial masters and the number of EDAs is more than 2 lakhs. What does an extra departmental agent get? He gets no more than Rs. 45 to Rs. 75. Let the hon. Deputy Minister of

Finance tell me whether a family of five can live on Rs. 45 to Rs. 75, which the EDA gets. I would like to know why this system is being maintained. When the regular employees of the Government are getting DA—even two DAs were given to them and five instalments of DA are pending—the EDAs are not eligible for any DA. They get only a peanut. That is the so-called wage that they earn. The Madan Kishore Committee, which went into this question, has come out with a report which shows some savings to the Government. The employees of the P and T Department call it as a 'mad' committee. The Committee did not even look into the aspirations and welfare of the employees. The Madan Kishore Committee was interested only in saving a few lakhs of rupees to the Government. The report is very clear and I quote...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): You need not quote the report.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: It is important and I quote:—

"The estimate shows additional expenditure due to the recommendations of the order of Rs. 99 lakhs. If the recommendations relating to reduction of minimum working hours of a branch office to two hours, is implemented, it may result in a saving of Rs. 109/- lakhs roughly against an additional expenditure of Rs. 45.5 lakhs otherwise."

Therefore, the Madan Kishore Committee has only helped in reducing the cost for the Government at the cost of the extra departmental workers who are one of the sufferers in this country.

Similarly, staff quarters are not available except for certain categories of employees who are eligible for rent-free quarters. Hardly one per cent of P and T employees get staff quarters. The officers of the divisional engineers at Trivandrum and Cannanore are situated in unhygienic conditions. In Calicut, where more than 1,500 P and T employees live, in Calicut city there are not enough staff quarters. Six acres of land acquired by the P and T Department eight years ago are still lying vacant. Similarly about Cochin a memorandum has been

submitted by the P and T Staff welfare association. They have made a number of demands which I think the hon. Minister will accept.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): You can pass it on to him.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: I would like to say that the medical services are very inadequate. Even in far away places like Mizoram where the Central Government employees are eligible for disturbed area allowance, they do not get it at the same rate as the Mizoram State Government employees. I would request the hon. Minister to see that the first report that he wrote is absolute falsehood. It should have been avoided and a realistic review should have been made. The report says that the relations between the administration and the staff remained cordial. This is absolute falsehood. I am prepared to challenge the Minister to prove where is the cordial staff relationship. Because of large-scale victimisation and the anti-labour policy of the P and T Department, the department is run by the administrators and not by political leaders. In that department, unfortunately, the relationship is strained. I hope and wish that the Department's function would improve by having better relationship with the staff. All victimisation should be forthwith stopped and a better climate should be created for a better employee-management relationship.

संचार मंत्रालय में उपमंत्री (श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया) : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, माननीय सदस्यों के भाषण काफी तीक्ष्ण हुए और उस से जहाँ हमारी आलोचना हुई उस के साथ साथ हमें इस बात का भी लाभ मिला कि हम जान सकें कि हमारी कमियाँ क्या हैं और क्या माननीय सदस्यों के सुझाव हैं। इस की जानकारी हम को मिली।

(इस समय उपसभाध्यक्ष, (श्री लोक नाथ मिश्र) पीठासीन हुए।)

माननीय सदस्यों ने डाक तारें विभागे के द्वारे में उस की विभिन्न कमियों की चर्चा की उन में कुछ प्वाइंट्स ऐसे हैं कि जिन

[श्री जगन्नाथ पट्टाडिया]

को मैं माननीय मंत्री जी के लिये छोड़ देता हूँ जैसे कि पाठक कमेटी की रिपोर्ट की चर्चा हुई या क्रास बार की चर्चा हुई या पी० एंड० टी० बोर्ड के फंशन के बारे में कुछ बातें कही गयीं। इसी तरह की और बातें हैं आई टी आई आदि की। मैं उन सवालियों को जिन को माननीय सदस्यों ने बहुत महत्व नहीं दिया या जिन की चर्चा कम की गयी उन को मैं पहले लेना चाहूंगा क्योंकि जैसा कि सभी सदस्यों ने कहा, संचार मंत्रालय अपने आप में देखने में तो कम महत्व का लगता है लेकिन सभी सदस्यों ने इस बात को माना कि यह इतने महत्व का महकमा है कि इस के बिना किसी का काम चला नहीं सकता। चाहे हम को अपना औद्योगिक विकास की गति को तेज करना हो या अपनी खेती बाड़ी का विकास करना हो या देश में सामाजिक और राजनीतिक एकता लानी हो या अपने प्रशासन की गति देना हो या सुरक्षा का ध्यान रखना हो, बिना संचार मंत्रालय के इस देश की तरक्की करने के काम में हम आगे नहीं बढ़ सकते। हाँ, यह मैं मानने के लिये तैयार हूँ कि जिस गति से संचार व्यवस्था को इस देश में बढ़ना चाहिए वह नहीं बढ़ पा रही है। लेकिन माननीय सदस्य इस बात की चर्चा करना भूल गये कि इस का कारण क्या था। इस का कारण संचार मंत्रालय था या इस के और भी कोई कारण थे। मैं निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि अगर हमारा बस चलता तो हम कोशिश करते कि जिन कमियों की चर्चा यहां की गयी है वह दूर हो जाती, लेकिन कुछ कमियों की चर्चा तब भी यहां होती क्योंकि जैसे-जैसे काम बढ़ता जाता है कुछ-न-कुछ

कमियां रह ही जाती हैं। लेकिन जहां तक संचार मंत्रालय के संबंध में गांवों में डाकखाने खोलने की या टेलीग्राफ आफिस खोलने की चर्चा हुई, उन सब की चर्चा हम सुनना नहीं चाहते। कोई भी व्यक्ति चाहे वह सरकारी अफसर हो या मंत्री हो या माननीय सदस्य हाँ, कोई भी इस बात को नहीं चाहेगा कि किसी तरह से भी हमारी कुशलता में, हमारी एफिशियेंसी में कमी आये। लेकिन उस के कुछ कारण हैं और उन को बिना जाने और उन को बिना समझे कई सदस्यों ने इस संबंध में चर्चा की। सब से पहला सवाल यह है कि पोस्टल सर्विस घाटे में चलती है, इस की चर्चा बड़े जोर शोर से की गयी। इस बात को उठाया गया कि यह एक मोशनल सर्विस है या एक कमर्शियल डिपार्टमेंट। माननीय सदस्यों ने स्वयं इस बात को कहा और मैं आप को बतलाना चाहता हूँ कि जहां एक तरफ हमारा महकमा जिसे टेली कम्युनिकेशन कहते हैं, उस से हम कमाते हैं वहां डाक में हम कुछ गंवाने भी हैं। माननीय सदस्य भूल जाते हैं कि हमारा देश समाजवाद की तरफ बढ़ रहा है और उस में असंभव है कि उन वर्गों की कि जो कमजोर माने जाते हैं, उन इलाकों को कि जो पिछड़े माने जाते हैं, वह स्थान कि जिन की तरफ किसी का ध्यान नहीं गया हम उन को छोड़ दें। तो इस लिये सरकार ने फैसला किया कि चाहे हम को घाटा ही उठाना पड़े, लेकिन जहां डाक तार और टेलीफोन की व्यवस्था नहीं हुई है, वहां हम उन को पहुंचायेंगे और इस लिये इस बात का फैसला किया गया है कि सामान्य परिस्थितियों में टेलीफोन सुविधा लाभ प्राप्त होने पर ही दी जा सकती है। दौरेगरी स्टेशनों पर यह सुविधा 25 प्रतिशत आय

ने पर भी दी जा सकती है। लेकिन जो इलाके पिछड़े माने जाते हैं वहां अगर हम को 15 प्रतिशत भी आमदनी होगी तो भी हम इस व्यवस्था को वहां ले जाने की कोशिश करेंगे और जो हिन्दी ट्रेक हैं जहां हमारे पौजी भाई लगे हुए हैं और जहां आबादी का घनत्व बहुत कम है वहां अगर आमदनी का हिमाव हम करते रहेंगे तो यह संचार व्यवस्था वहां नहीं हो पायेगी इस लिये हम ने फैसला किया है कि चाहे घाटा 90 प्रतिशत ही हो तब भी वहां हम डाक तार की व्यवस्था करेंगे और इस लिये चौथी-पंचवर्षीय योजना की चर्चा की गयी कि उस में जो टारगेट तय किये गये थे वह पूरे हुए या नहीं हुए। न तो चौथी पंचवर्षीय योजना के कोई टारगेट बाकी रहे न पिछले साल के टारगेट बाकी रहे। हम ने इस बात का फैसला किया था कि इस साल में, जो चल रहा है 250 पी सी ओ खोलेंगे, लेकिन 250 की जगह 390 पी सी ओ खोल चुके हैं। हम पीछे नहीं रहे, आगे बढ़ने जाते हैं। पैस की कमी रही है, फाइनेंशियल कान्ट्रोल्ड रहे हैं लेकिन उस के बावजूद हम आगे बढ़ते जाते हैं। यह बात सही है कि कहीं भ्रष्टाचार की शिकायत हो सकती है, मैं उस को डिफेंड नहीं करना चाहता हूं। कई ऐसे मामले हमारे नोटिस में भी आते हैं लीअर लेविन पर इस तरह की बातें होती होंगी, लेकिन यह बात माननी पड़ेगी कि जो हमारे पास रिसोर्स हैं उन को देखते हुए इस बात का प्रयास किया जा रहा है कि ज्यादा से ज्यादा स्थानों पर इस व्यवस्था को पहुंचाया जा सके।

माननीय सदस्यों ने इस बात की चर्चा बहुत की कि जहां पहले घाटा 7 करोड़ का हुआ था वहां इस साल

घाटे का अंदाजा 50 करोड़ का लगाया जा रहा है। श्रीमन्, मैं निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि जैसे जैसे हमारी योजनाएं बढ़ती चली जा रही है हमारा खर्चा कैसे पीछे रह सकता है। हमारी योजना ढाई गुना बढ़ गयी है। जो 50 करोड़ का घाटा है उस सिलसिले में इस बात को ध्यान में रखना पड़ेगा कि काम बढ़ रहा है, रोजगार बढ़ रहा है। हमारा मुहकमा ऐसा मुहकमा है कि जो जाय ओरियेंटेड है, ज्यादा से ज्यादा लोगों को काम दे सकता है। हमारे मुहकमे में चार लाख 29 हजार आदमी काम करते हैं। उन को हम भले ही उतनी तनख्वाह नहीं दे पाते जितनी देनी चाहिए। उन की तुलना एक माननीय सदस्य ने की इंग्लैंड और बैंक के कर्मचारियों से। इस बात को सभी जानते हैं कि इंग्लैंड और बैंक में काम करने वाले कर्मचारियों की ज्यादा तनख्वाह मिलनी है। सरकार में बैठ कर हम लोग इस बात की कोशिश करते हैं कि जहां हम इंग्लैंड से अच्छी सेवा ले उस के बदले में उन को अच्छी तनख्वाह भी दें। हमारी कोशिश इस बात की रहती है कि ज्यादा से ज्यादा काम होना चाहिए। जो घाटे की चर्चा की गयी है वह बहुत बड़ा चढ़ा कर की गयी है। उन चीजों के लिये जिन्हें लोगों तक पहुंचाना है घाटा होना जरूरी है। डाक के मुहकमे को कमिशियल डिपार्टमेंट मान कर नहीं चला जा सकता। इस को सेवा का मुहकमा मानना पड़ेगा। आप हेल्थ मिनिस्ट्री को देखें। उस में आमदनी नहीं होती होगी। शिक्षा मंत्रालय को देखें, उस में आमदनी नहीं होती होगी। इसी प्रकार आप पोस्टल डिपार्टमेंट को देखें तो आप को समझने में कठिनाई नहीं होगी।

[श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया]

हम ने कुछ नयी सेवाएँ भी जारी की हैं। माननीय सदस्य इस बात को जानते हैं कि रिकार्डेंड डिलीवरी सर्विस हम ने 1-11-74 से शुरू की है जिस पर 65 पैसे फीस लगती है अगर एक-नालेजमेंट ब्राह्मे तो 15 पैसे और लगते हैं। मैथिली कुरियर ने कहा कि यह तो फ्लाप हो गयी। अभी तो हमने शुरू की है यह फ्लाप कहां से होगी। उन्होंने बड़ी स्कालन की एक्सप्रेस डिलीवरी की। मुझे कंमन्टेटिव कमेटी की बात याद आती है कि जब उन्होंने खुद कहा था कि एक्सप्रेस डिलीवरी एक्सप्रेस नहीं है। एक्सप्रेस का चार्ज तो हम अदा करते हैं लेकिन जो माधायन चिट्ठी है उस से भी ज्यादा देर में वह पहुंचती है। लोगों को उस के बारे में शिकायत हुआ करती थी इसलिए हमने सर्वे किया और पाया कि एक्सप्रेस डिलीवरी के बारे में शिकायतें हैं इसलिए उस को बंद करके रिकार्डेंड डिलीवरी सर्विस शुरू की।

हमने एक और नया काम शुरू किया है और वह यह है कि प्राइवेट एजेंट्स के माध्यम से डाक टिकट बांटना शुरू किया है। उनको डेड परसेंट कमीशन दिया जाता है। लोगों द्वारा यह कहा जाता था कि 15 पैसे के टिकट के लिए एक-एक, दो-दो मील जाना पड़ता है। हमने बहुत सारे लोगों को जो ऐसा काम करना चाहते हैं उनको इस बात की इजाजत दी है कि वे कमीशन लेकर यह सेवा दे सकें जिससे आगम के साथ घर के नजदीक, कार्यालय के नजदीक डाक-टिकट आदि लोगों को प्राप्त हो सकें।

इसी तरह से मिलिटरी वालों को जो पेंशन मिलती थी वह कई बार गड़बड़ हो जाया करती थी। वह काम

मेविग्स बैंक के माध्यम से हमने शुरू किया है। यह इसी वर्ष शुरू किया है। अभी मारे देश में यह शुरू नहीं किया है। अगर और जगह से मांग आएगी, डिपेंस मिनिस्ट्री चाहेगी तो और जगह भी इस काम को शुरू किया जा सकता है।

कुछ और स्कीमों भी हमारे विचाराधीन हैं। खास तौर से पेंशन पाने वाले भाईयो के मनी आर्डर जाने में देर हो जाती है। अगर वे चाहें तो उनकी पेंशन का एमाउंट भ्रामल सर्विस का जो उनका खाता खुला हुआ है उसमें ऑटोमैटिकली जमा कर देंगे।

उसमें ऑटोमैटिकली जमा कराने से उनको रमीद मिल जाएगी, उनको सेक्यूरिटी रहेगी और हमारे पास इस बात की जिम्मेदारी रहेगी कि हमारा जो कर्मचारी काम करेगा वह रकम उसके खाते में जमा हो जानी चाहिए। यह जमा हुई या नहीं, हम भी इसकी जांच कर सकेंगे और उनको भी लाभ हो जाएगा। यह मामला हमारे विचाराधीन है। रोहतक जिले में यह सेवा हमने शुरू कर दी है, और जगहों की हम जांच कर रहे हैं। अगर मांग आयेगी तो हम शुरू कर देंगे।

एक नई सेवा विवेक मेल सर्विस अभी अभी हमने शुरू की है। उसके जरिये आज की डाली हुई डाक आज ही निक्खेंगी बशर्ते कि उस पर पिन कोड लिखा हुआ हो। पीले रंग के जो लैटर वाक्स इसके लिए हैं उनमें डाला गया हो।

श्री हर्षदेव मालवीय : कहां कहा से सीखें लोग पिन कोड ? पढ़ें, लिखें तमाम बेचारे किसान है नहीं जो इसको जानते हों . . .

(Interruption)

श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया : हमने इस बात की व्यवस्था कर दी है कि हर एक जगह और विजनेस हाउसेज में पिन कोड का ज्ञान लोगों को रहे जो भी चिट्ठी लिखता है या लिखाने वाला होता है अगर वह नहीं जानता हो तो लिखने वाला जरूर संख्या जानता होगा। इसलिए मालवीय जी से मेरी प्रार्थना है कि इस बात को समझेंगे। मेरे जैसे अनपढ़ उनके पास पहुंच जाये वे भले ही न बता पायें लेकिन मैं मानता हूं कि आप उनको बता देंगे। पिन कोड अभी उतना पापुलर नहीं हुआ है, एक दिन के अन्दर कोई पा-पुलैरिटी प्राप्त नहीं कर सकता है। पिन कोड को लिखने से डाक छाटने में आसानी होगी, उसको देने में आसानी होगी। मैं मही मान् में सदस्यों से प्रार्थना करूंगा कि नम्बर के याद करने में भले ही कुछ कठिनाई हो, उसको लिखने में भी कठिनाई होगी, लेकिन कम पड़ा लिखा भी आसानी से उसको छांट सकता है, डाक एक जगह से दूसरे जगह पहुंचाने में इससे सुविधा होगी। इसलिए मुझे आशा है कि इसका सब स्वागत करेंगे।

इसी तरह मैं डाक टिकटों के बारे में आपको बताना चाहता हूँ कि डाक टिकटों पर काफी खर्चा होता था। माननीय सदस्यों ने पिछली बार लोक सभा में कहा था कि इस पर बहुत सा पैसा खर्च हो जाता है। लिफाफा भी साथ देने हैं, टिकट भी साथ देने हैं। इसके लिए फ्रैंकिंग मशीन जिसको हम सौ रुपये महीने किंगये पर में देते हैं भारत सरकार के बहुत से विभागों ने इस सुविधा के लिए इन मशीनों को खपलब्ध किया है। इससे बहुत सारा कागज, टिकटों की छपाई आदि पर खर्च होने वाला पैसा बच जाता है और बहुत सुविधा उनको

प्राप्त होती है। ये बहुत सारे नये काम हमने शुरू किये हैं।

एक माननीय सदस्य : पिन कोड में सुविधा किस तरह से मिलती है।

श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया : पिन कोड बड़ी आसानी के साथ कम पढ़े-लिखे व्यक्ति भी पहचान सकते हैं। माननीय सदस्य जो विरोधी दल के हैं, लक्ष्मणन साहब, उन्होंने कहा कि मद्रास में केवल अंग्रेजी में काम किया जाता है, लोकल भाषा में काम नहीं करने देते। तो वहां का लोकल आदमी अंग्रेजी न भी जानता हो तो किसी भी भाषा को जानने वाला पिन कोड को पहचान सकता है। दूसरी बात यह है कि जैसे पंजाब, हरियाणा या रोहतक जिले में आपने पत्र भेजना होता तो पहले गांव का नाम लिखा जाता है, वह तो जायद आपको लिखना पड़ेगा, लेकिन डिलिवरी जान आपको नहीं लिखना पड़ेगा, यदि आप पिन कोड लिख दें तो पत्र पहुंच जाएगा। तीसरी सुविधा मार्टिंग में हो जाती है। मार्टर पहले गांव का नाम देखता है, फिर तहसील का नाम, फिर जिले का नाम पढ़ता है फिर वह तय कर पाता है कि किस खाने में इस चिट्ठी को फेंकना चाहिए। अगर आपने पिन कोड लिख दिया तो बड़ी आसानी से जिम खाने में उसे डालना चाहिए उसे वह फेंक सकता है। इससे डाक छाटने में सुविधा होती है और बहुत समय की बचत होती है। इस तरह से जैसे जैसे समय गुजरता जाएगा, जैसे जैसे हम उसको अडाप्ट करने चले जायेंगे, वैसे वैसे धीरे धीरे करके हम इस बात को महसूस करेंगे कि यह काम सुविधा का है।

एक बात मैं और निवेदन करना चाहूंगा। वह यह है कि रेलवे मंत्रालय चाहेंगा

[श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया]

तो हम रेलवे मंत्रालय के लिए भी पेंशन स्कीम लागू करने की सोच रहे हैं।

इसी तरह से एक मुझाव और आया है कि पोस्ट आफिस के जरिए क्यों न मोटर विहिकल्स टैक्स का कलेक्शन शुरू किया जाए। यह मुझाव हम पहले से ही देख रहे हैं और कोई मुझाव दें तो उस पर हम अमल करेंगे। दिल्ली में ऐक्मर्गिमेंटल बेसिस पर हम यह काम शुरू करेंगे। दूसरे महकमें ने अगर चाहा तो हम स्माल सेविज का काम भी करते हैं, रेडियो और टी० वी० लाइसेंस का काम भी करते हैं, पी० एल० आई० का काम भी करते हैं, उस सब के लिए हमको कुछ न कुछ कमीशन मिलता है, और भी काम हम करेंगे। जो हमारा खर्चा होता है, कास्ट प्राइम पर हम उसको करते हैं। जो घाटा होता है यह हमको ऐक्स्ट्रा देना पड़ता है। कई काम हम फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री के लिए करते हैं, कई काम इफमेंशन एण्ड ब्राडकास्टिंग के लिए करते हैं इस तरह से आप और काम देंगे तो निश्चित रूप से जो हमारा घाटा हो रहा है वह कम हो जाएगा।

मैं माननीय सदस्यों से प्रार्थना करूंगा कि वे मेहरबानी करके विचार करें इस बात पर कि जैसे कलेक्शन आफ मोटर वेहिकल की बात कही अगर इस तरह कोई और मुझाव दे पाएं तो उस पर भी विचार किया जा सकता है।

एक बात बहुत ज़ोर से कही जाती है कि हमने नए पोस्ट आफिस पर बैंन लगाया हुआ है। हमने बैंन लगाया है जहां पोस्ट आफिसें घाटे में चल रहे थे और जहां मासूची

घाटा था उसको हमने बंद नहीं किया। जहां बहुत जरूरी है पोस्ट आफिसें जहां वहां हमने पाबन्दी नहीं लगा रखी है। सरल बैंकवर्ड एरियाज के अंदर अगर 5-7 मील के अंदर दो हजार की आबादी का गांव है तो वहां अगर कोई पोस्ट आफिस नहीं है तो वहां पोस्ट आफिस खोलने पर पाबन्दी नहीं है।

श्री कामेश्वर सिंह: अध्यक्ष महोदय, जो पोस्ट आफिसें खुले हुए हैं उनको ये बंद न करें हमारा यह अनुरोध है।

श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया: इनके दिमाग में अगर कोई खास पोस्ट आफिस की बात है तो वह मुझे लिख कर भेज दें मैं उसकी जांच करवा लूंगा। लेकिन 10 साल से ज्यादा घाटे में जो पोस्ट आफिसें चल रहे हैं वे कभी घाटा पूरा नहीं कर सकते। उनके बारे में यह कहना कि वे घाटा पूरा कर लेंगे उचित नहीं है। शायद माननीय सदस्य के पास कोई सब होगा जिससे वे पूरा करा लेंगे।

मैंने आपको निवेदन किया कि देश की आजादी के समय हमारे यहां डाकघरों की संख्या 22 हजार के करीब थी। अगर आज आप देखें तो 1 लाख 17 हजार से ज्यादा डाकघर इस देश में खुले हुए हैं। यह कहना कि इस दृष्टि से हमारा विकास नहीं हुआ यह ठीक नहीं है। मैं आपको बताना चाहता हूं कि जिस समय देश आजाद हुआ था उस समय 16 हजार 130 आदमियों के पीछे एक डाकघर था और आज लगभग 4 हजार 6 सौ व्यक्तियों के पीछे एक पोस्ट आफिस काम करता है। दूरी के हिसाब से देखा जाए तो जिस समय देश आजाद हुआ था उस समय लगभग 146

स्केयर किलो मीटर की दूरी पर एक पोस्ट आफ़ीस था और अब 27 स्केयर किलो मीटर की दूरी पर डाकखाना काम करता है। इसी बात से आप अंदाज़ा लगा सकते हैं कि कितनी तेज़ी से हम इस काम को बढ़ा रहे हैं। जिस समय देश आज़ाद हुआ था 30 गांव के पीछे एक डाकखाना सर्व होता था और अब 5-6 गांव के पीछे एक डाकखाना सर्व होता है। इस दृष्टि से आप देख सकते हैं कि हमारा काम बहुत तेज़ी से बढ़ रहा है।

इसी तरह से सेविंग एकाउंट को चर्चा भी बहुत की गई। देश को आज़ादी के समय 1948 के अंदर केवल 50 लाख खाते थे। अब ऐसा लगता है कि उनकी संख्या बढ़ कर 210 लाख हो गई है। जो रकम जमा है वह अंदाज़ा रकम 3 हजार 248 करोड़ रुपए के करीब है जो कि सरकार के, व्यापारियों के और विकास के कामों में इस्तेमाल में आ रही है क्योंकि यह काम बहुत बढ़ गया है इसलिए हमने कोशिश की है कि जैसे टेलर सिस्टम बैंकों में हुआ करता है उसी तरह पोस्ट आफ़ीस में जो हेड पोस्ट आफ़ीस हैं उनमें शुरू किया जाए। एक इन्वैन्टव स्कीम भी शुरू की है जिसके दो ड्रा निकल भी चुके हैं। जिसकी निश्चित रकम जमा है वे उसके भागीदार होते हैं। 18 करोड़ रुपए की आमदनी इससे हुई है और धीरे-धीरे लगता है इसमें हमारा घाटा पूरा हो जायगा।

मैं और बातों की चर्चा नहीं करना चाहूंगा लेकिन दो-चार बातें कहूंगा जो कि बहुत जोर से कही गई है और जिसकी शुरुआत भट्ट साहब ने की है और उसी को पकड़ा है मीता राम सिंह जी

ने और माथुर साहब ने। उन्होंने कहा है कि डायरेक्टरी हिन्दी में छपनी चाहिए और बराबर छपती रहनी चाहिए। मैं निवेदन करूंगा कि अधिकांश राज्यों में जहां हमारे मकिल हैं उनके अंदर हिन्दी और अंग्रेज़ी दोनों में डायरेक्टरी छप रही है। इसके बाद मैंने यह भी तय किया है कि हिन्दी अंग्रेज़ी के साथ छपे। कुछ राज्य ऐसे हैं

श्री नन्द किशोर भट्ट (मध्य प्रदेश): हमारा सुझाव यह था कि डायरेक्टरी रोटेशन के साथ छपे जिससे करेक्शन बगैर इन्सर्ट की जा सके। आप अगर पहले अंग्रेज़ी की डायरेक्टरी निकालते हैं तो उसके छः महीने बाद हिन्दी की निकालिए जिससे इन छः महीनों में जो करेक्शन रह गई हो वह की जा सके। जो गलतियां हों वे दूर की जा सकें।

श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया (माननीय सदस्य का सुझाव बहुत अच्छा है। हम इस पर विचार कर रहे हैं। जो मैंने कहा उसका मतलब भी यही निकलता है। पहले हिन्दी निकल जाए उसके बाद अंग्रेज़ी छप जाए तो यह भी रोटेशन हो जाता है।

माननीय माथुर जी ने टेलीफोन एडवाइजरी कमेट्री के बारे में कहा है। माथुर साहब हम को सब बातों की जानकारी तो हो नहीं सकती लेकिन मैं इतना कहना चाहता हूं कि राज्य सरकारों में जो चैम्बर आफ़ कामर्स एंड इंडस्ट्री है उसका रेप्रजेंटेटिव इस कमेट्री में होता है। मेडिकल साइड से जो मेडिकल एसोसिएशन होती है उससे एक मेम्बर होता है। इसी प्रकार से प्रेम साइड से प्रेम एसोसिएशन होती है उससे एक

[श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया]

मेम्बर होता है। माननीय सदस्य को मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि हम अपने आप में न राजनीतिक आधार पर, न पार्टी के आधार पर और न व्यक्तिगत किसी भी इसमें रिप्रजेंटेशन देने हैं। विभिन्न तबके के लोग और जैसा मैंने अभी निवेदन किया सब एसोसिएशन में प्रतिनिधि उस कमेटी में होता है। हमारी कोशिश यह रहती है कि सभी तबकों का प्रतिनिधित्व इसमें हो। बहुत जोर से माथुर जी ने कहा कि जोधपुर कांड में टेलीफोन एडवाइजरी कमेटी का सदस्य फंसा है। मैं माथुर साहब को बताना चाहता हूँ कि हम को सब जगह की जानकारी तो होती नहीं है और न हो सकती है, लेकिन इतना अवश्य कहना चाहता हूँ कि जिन स्थानों पर चालू कनेक्शन और प्रतीक्षा सूची के आवेदकों को मिलाकर कुल संख्या 1,500 (पन्द्रह सौ) या इससे अधिक है, उनमें से बहुत से स्थानों के लिए टेलीफोन सलाहकार समितियाँ गठित कर दी गई हैं। (Interruption)

5 P. M. यह सिर्फ कलकत्ते का ही स्थान नहीं है बम्बई, बरेली, कानपुर आदि सभी स्थानों पर एडवाइजरी कमेटी बननी हुई है। मैं आपसे यह निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि जायदे माननीय सदस्यों को भी इस बात की जानकारी होगी कि जो पार्लियामेंट के सदस्य हैं और जिस क्षेत्र को वे रिप्रजेंट करते हैं, यदि वहां पर इस प्रकार की एडवाइजरी कमेटी होती है तो उसमें उनको पृष्ठ-पृष्ठ कर रखा जाता है और अगर इस संबंध में कहीं पर कोई गलती होती है तो हम उसको भी ठीक करते हैं। लोक सभा के सदस्य चाहे कांग्रेस के हों

या विरोधी दलों के हो उनसे बराबर सम्पर्क करके ही एडवाइजरी कमेटीज में उनको रखा जाता है और साथ ही अगर राज्य सभा के सदस्य उस शहर के रहने वाले हों तो हम उनको भी पृष्ठने की कोशिश करते हैं।

गृह मंत्रालय, कार्मिक और प्रशासनिक सुधार तथा संसदीय कार्य विभाग में राज्य मंत्री (श्री ओम मेहता) : मिनिस्टर्स के घरों और दफ्तर के लिए भी कोई ठीक तरह की व्यवस्था कर दी जाए।

श्री. जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया : श्रीमन्, जहां तक मंत्रियों, उप-मंत्रियों आदि के लिए इस प्रकार के टेलीफोन की व्यवस्था का संबंध है, इसके लिए तो अलग से व्यवस्था की हुई है। आप खुद ही संसदीय कार्य मंत्री हैं। यह बात सही है कि पार्लियामेंट के मेम्बरों को भी हम पूरी तरह से टेलीफोन नहीं दे पाए हैं, लेकिन इसके लिए अलग से कायदे-कानून बने हुए हैं। आप मेहरबानी करके अगर लिख कर हमारे पास कोई सुझाव दे दें और इस संबंध में जो खर्च आता है उसका भी निर्णय कर लें तो हम अवश्य आपके सुझावों पर विचार करेंगे। राज्य सभा और लोक सभा के सदस्यों को टेलीफोन देने की हमारी बराबर कोशिश रहती है।

श्रीमन्, कई माननीय सदस्यों ने यह भी कहा कि राशन कार्ड पोस्ट आफिस के जरिए बांटे जाने चाहिए। इस संबंध में मेरा निवेदन यह है कि यह विषय खाद्य मंत्रालय में संबंधित है और वे ही इसका साग कारोबार करते हैं। अगर खाद्य मंत्रालय इस बारे में हमारे साथ कोई लिखा-पढ़ी करे तो हम इस सुझाव पर विचार कर सकते हैं। वैसे यह सुझाव बहुत अच्छा है।

टेलीग्रामों के देर से पहुंचने के संबंध में काफी चर्चा हुई और यह कहा गया कि जो टेलीग्राम किया जाता है वह तो देर से पहुंचता है, लेकिन जो टेलीग्राम करने वाला इंतज़ार होता है वह अपने गन्तव्य स्थान पर पहले पहुंच जाता है। यह बात सही है और जो सही बात है उसको हम गलत नहीं बताना चाहते हैं। यह बात भी हमारी नॉटिस में आई है कि संसद् भवन से जो तार किये गये वे भी देर से पहुंचे। जब इस प्रकार की स्थिति हो तो हमें इसके कारण भी तलाश करने पड़ेंगे। हमारे पास जो मशीनरी है और उसकी जो क्षमता है वह सीमित है और उसके मुकामले में तारों की संख्या बहुत ज्यादा होती है। तार जब देर से पहुंचते हैं तो इस संबंध में कोई-कोई सज्जन तो अपने सुझाव दे देते हैं, लेकिन कोई-कोई सज्जन ऐसे भी होते हैं जो तारों को ही चोरी कर तोड़ देते हैं और इस कारण से तारों के निश्चित समय में पहुंचने में देरी होती है और लेट डिलेवरी होती है। डा० मैथ्यू कूरियन ने इस संबंध में काफी जोरदार बातें कही। मैं उनसे निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि वे भी यूनिशन में काम करते हैं और इस बात की शायद उनको जानकारी होगी कि बड़े-बड़े जहज़ों के अन्दर मोटर साइकिल द्वारा तारों के वितरण की हमने कोशिश की है। लेकिन यह काम तब तक संभव नहीं हो सकता है जब तक कि उसमें कर्मचारियों की यूनिशनों का सहयोग न मिले। यूनिशनों के अन्दर चुने हुए लोग होते हैं। इसलिए आज आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि इस काम में सब का सहयोग प्राप्त किया जाय।

श्री हर्ष देव मालवीय (उत्तर प्रदेश): संसद् भवन में जो पोस्ट आफिस है

उसमें सब महिलाएँ रख दी गई हैं, इसी लिए शायद गड़बड़ी होती है।

श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया: आप जानते हैं कि यह अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय महिला साल है और इस बात की कोशिश की गई है कि इस वर्ष महिलाओं को अधिक आगे बढ़ने के मौके दिए जाएँ और उनको बराबर के हक मिले। शायद भालवीय जी वहाँ गए नहीं हैं। महिलाएँ तो ज्यादा कुशलतापूर्वक और एफिसिएन्सी के साथ काम करती हैं और वहाँ पर अच्छा काम हो रहा है।

जहाँ तक लेट डिलेवरी का मसाला है, टेलीग्राम के संबंध में लेट डिलेवरी के कुछ कारण मैंने बताया हैं, लेकिन जहाँ तक लेटर्स की लेट डिलेवरी का मसाला है, इस संबंध में मैं कुछ ज्यादा खुलासा के साथ निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ। श्री लक्ष्मणन् यद्यपि विरोधी दल में हैं, लेकिन उन्होंने इस संबंध में कुछ कारण दिए हैं। उन्होंने एक कारण यह भी बताया कि लेट डिलेवरी के लिए हमारा महकमा जिम्मेदार है। लेकिन मेरा कहना यह है कि पत्रों में जो पते लिखे जाते हैं, अगर वे उसी प्रकार से नहीं पड़े जा सकें जिस प्रकार से भेजने वाले ने लिखे हैं तो ऐसी स्थिति में पत्र के निश्चित समय पर और निश्चित स्थान पर पहुंचने में कठिनाई और देरी होती है। ऐसी व्यवस्था तो नहीं की जा सकती कि हर स्थान पर पते लिखने के लिए टाइपिस्ट रख लिए जाएँ, लेकिन अगर पते ठीक प्रकार से लिखे जाएँ तो उनको पढ़ने में आसानी होती है। दूसरी बात पिन कोड के संबंध में भी कही गई है। देर से चिट्ठियाँ पहुंचने के जहाँ ये कुछ कारण हैं वहाँ यह भी एक कारण है कि हमारा डाकिया दिल्ली

[श्री जगन्नाथ पट्टाभिया]

से बम्बई स्वयं चिट्ठी लेकर नहीं जाता है। पत्रों को एक स्थान से दूसरे स्थान तक पहुंचाने के लिए हमें रेलों और हवाई जहाज का सहारा लेना पड़ता है और कई बार ऐसा होता है कि रेल से सामान उतार कर मोटर में रखा जाता है और ट्रैफिक जाम होने कारण गाड़ी ठीक समय पर नहीं पहुंच पाती है। हमारे पास इस प्रकार की शिकायतें आई हैं कि घंटों ट्रैफिक जाम होने के कारण चिट्ठियां देर से पहुंची हैं। श्री अमजद अली ने हवाई जंक्शन का जिक्र किया। वहां पर घंटों हमारी मेल सर्चिसे वाहन खड़े रहते हैं। ड्राइवर को अगर आगे बढ़ने के लिए रास्ता ही नहीं मिलेगा तो वह किस प्रकार से अपने गन्तव्य स्थान पर पहुंच सकता है। इसके साथ-साथ कई बार रेल कनेक्शन भी खराब हो जाते हैं और हवाई सर्चिस में भी दिक्कत पैदा हो जाती है। (Interruption) अगर यह बात आपकी जानकारी में नहीं है तो मैं क्या करूं। मेरी जानकारी तो यह है कि कलकत्ते में दूसरा पुल बन रहा है और वह बन जायेगा तो आसानी हो जायेगी। इसी तरह से तीसरा भी धीरे-धीरे बन जायेगा।

एक बात मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि इस बात के बारे में जोरों से कहा गया है लेटर्स के अलावा कि मनी-आर्डर्स देर से मिलते हैं। हमारी नोटिस में भी मनी-आर्डर्स देरी में पहुंचने के बारे में कई मामले आये हैं और मुझे बहुत दुःख और अफसोस के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि फौजी आफिसर की पत्नी के साथ इस तरह का व्यवहार किया गया है और उसको मनी-आर्डर नहीं मिला। इस तरह की बातों के बारे में बराबर हमारे पास चिट्ठियां आती

रहती हैं और हम उनकी जांच करते हैं। कई मामलों में तो यह देखा गया है कि पना गलत लिखा होता है, नाम गलत होता है और आइडेंटिफिकेशन भी ठीक तरह से नहीं होता है, जिनकी वजह से मनी-आर्डर के पहुंचने में देरी हो जाती है और मिलने में भी कठिनाई होती है। कई बार ऐसा होता है कि कर्मचारी भी देर से देने की कोशिश करते हैं। इस तरह के कई मामले हमारे सामने आये हैं और हमने उन लोगों के खिलाफ कदम उठाए हैं। हमारी कोशिश यही रहती है कि सब लोगों को समय पर मनी-आर्डर पहुंच जाये। अगर कोई मनी-आर्डर लेने वाला नहीं होता है तो भेजने वाले को वापस कर दिया जाता है। ऐसे कितने ही मामले हमारे पास आए हैं और अगर आप चाहे तो आकड़े हम दे सकते हैं।

यह बात भी मैं निवेदन कर देना चाहता हूं कि जहां तक कलकत्ते के जो० पी० ओ० और ट्रेड यूनियन की बात है, जिनके बारे में अमजद अली ने कहा, उनके बारे में तो माननीय मंत्री जो ही वनलायेगे। लेकिन जहां तक स्टाफ रिलेशंस की बात है और जिस की चर्चा सभी माननीय सदस्यों ने की है कि स्टाफ के साथ नाइंसाफी होती है, इलकुदेड प्रतिनिधियों, को रिकग्नाइज्ड नहीं किया जाता है और यूनियनों को बांटने की कोशिश की जाती है। इस सन्दर्भ में हमारे भूतपूर्व माननीय मंत्री श्री बहूगुणा जो इस समय उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री हैं, उनका नाम लिया गया है और यह कहा गया है कि उनकी ही यह कार्रवानी थी कि यूनियनों को बांट दिया जाय। मैं आप से यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूं कि डाक तार विभाग में मुझे काफी समय

से काम करने का मौभाग्य प्राप्त हुआ है। इसके अलावा और कई मंत्रालयों में काम करने का मुझे अवसर प्राप्त हुआ है, मंत्रियों के साथ कार्य करने का अवसर प्राप्त हुआ है, लेकिन मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि श्री बहुगुणा जी को इस बारे में दोष देना ठीक नहीं है। स्वयं माननीय सदस्य यूनियन ने स्वयं अपने आप को देखे कि उन्होंने इस बारे में क्या कोशिश की है। आप मुझे माफ करेंगे कि जब जब भी यूनियन बनी है वे तब बनी हैं जब कि कर्मचारी आपस में सड़े या फिर नेता आपस में लड़े। हमारी कोशिश तो हमेशा यही रही है और जैसा श्री रफीअहमद साहब का हवाला दिया गया है, श्री जगजीवन राम जी के नाम का हवाला दिया गया है, तो हम भी उनके ही फालोवर्स हैं और हमारी हमेशा यही कोशिश रहती है कि इस बारे में जो सिद्धान्त तय हो चुके हैं उन्हीं पर चले। एक यूनियन एक महकमे के लिए हो, यही हमारी कोशिश होती है। जब कर्मचारी और नेता आपस में मड़ने लगे, राजनीति के मामलों में फंस जाये, तो उसमें हम क्या कर सकते हैं। श्री लक्ष्मणन् जी ने बहुत जोगों से कहा कि हम इस बात की कोशिश नहीं करना चाहते हैं कि एक यूनियन बने और अलग से यूनियन बनाना चाहते हैं। लेकिन मैं श्री कूरियन और श्री लक्ष्मणन् से कहना चाहता हूँ कि आप लोगों ने तो अपनी अलग अलग यूनियनें बनाई हुई हैं। जब राष्ट्रीय फेडरेशन बना है तो उसमें यूनियनें रहेंगी क्योंकि फेडरेशन किसी यूनियन की ही बनती है। अगर यूनियन रखना है तो फिर फेडरेशन नहीं बनेगा और नेशनल लेवल पर फिर कोई काम नहीं हो सकेगा। आज नेशनल लेवल पर जे० सी० एम० के प्रतिनिधि

बैठते हैं और बैठकर स्टाफ की तकलीफों को पेश करते हैं। सारे स्टाफ को क्या क्या सुविधा मिलनी चाहिये, यह बात वे पेश कर सकते हैं। तो अगर एक यूनियन होती है तो उससे बात करना आसान होता है। जब एक यूनियन दूसरी यूनियन से लड़ती है, तो फिर किसी चीज को इम्प्लीमेंट करना, किसी बात पर डिमीशन लेना मुश्किल हो जाता है। इसलिए खासतौर पर श्री कूरियन और श्री लक्ष्मणन् जी से प्रार्थना करूंगा कि पार्टी पोलिटिक्स की बात को छोड़िये और जो फेडरेशन बनी हुई है उसके साथ मिलकर काम करें।

उनकी तरफ से जो यह कहा जा रहा है कि सरकार की तरफ से हस्तक्षेप हो रहा है, तो इस सम्बन्ध में मैं यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि हम इस मामले में हस्तक्षेप करना नहीं चाहते हैं और हम यूनियनों को आजादी देकर चलना चाहते हैं और जितनी मदद हम से हो सकती है, उनकी हम मदद करना चाहते हैं। इसलिए मैं आपको यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि हमने कर्मचारियों की भलाई के लिए एक वर्ल्डफयर फंड भी खोला है। इसको हमने 8 करोड़ रुपये से खोला था और अब वह बढ़कर 20 करोड़ रुपये तक पहुंच गया है। इस फंड से कर्मचारियों के बच्चों और उनके परिवार की भलाई के कार्य किए जाते हैं। उनके लिए हमने रिक्रिएशन क्लब खोल दिए हैं और टिफन रूप खोल दिये हैं। इस तरह के हमने बहुत से काम किए हैं। इसके साथ ही साथ हमने पी० एन्ड टी० के कर्मचारियों के लिए हावीडे होम्स खोल दिए हैं, टिल स्टेशनों में खोले हैं जहां पर

[श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया]

पी० एन्ड टी० के कर्मचारी अपने परिदार वालों के साथ रह सकते हैं।

इसी तरह से हमने करीब 200 ब्रैड्स देश के विभिन्न अस्पतालों में रिजर्व करा दिये हैं जो पी० एन्ड टी० के कर्मचारियों के लिए हैं। जिन कर्मचारियों को टी० बी० या कोई दूसरी खास बीमारी हो जाती है, उनको इन अस्पतालों में भर्ती करवाया जाता है ताकि वे वहां पर अपना इलाज करवा सकें। इसके अलावा हमने डिस्पेंसरिया खोल दी है। इन डिस्पेंसरियों के साथ अगर डाक्टर अच्छे नहीं हैं, तो प्राइवेट मेडिकल एक्सपर्ट से भी वे कंसल्ट करवा सकते हैं और उनको इसके लिए मेडिकल रिइम्बर्समेंट दिया जा सकता है।

अभी हमारे भट्ट जी ने जो यूनियन के नेता हैं कहा कि अगर कोई आदमी ठीक तरह से काम नहीं करता है तो उसको पनिशमेंट दिया जाता चाहिए। मैं आपसे निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि पनिशमेंट देने की हमारी पोलिसी नहीं है, हमारी पोलिसी है वेलफेयर की। सबसे अच्छा तरीका यही हो सकता है कि आप अपने यूनियन के साथियों को समझान-बुझाएं कि वे ज्यादा काम करें, मेडिकल बिल बेकार न मांगें—कभी-यह भी हो सकता है। ओवर-टाइम के बारे में मैं निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि रीजनेबिल तरीके पर लेना चाहेंगे तो देने में हमको एतराज नहीं है, लेकिन ओवर-टाइम लेने के लिए ओवर-टाइम लें यह ठीक नहीं है। एक तरफ देश में बहुत बेरोजगारी है और दूसरी तरफ जो काम पर लग जाते हैं वे मेडिकल बिल के जरिए और ओवर-टाइम के जरिए इतना पैसा लेना चाहते हैं कि और लोगों को रोजगार देना सम्भव नहीं हो पाता। जब ज्यादा ओवर-

टाइम देगे तो नए लोगों को काम कहां से मिलेगा। हम मानते हैं कि ओवर-टाइम के जरिए ज्यादा काम हो जाया करता है। वे लोग अच्छा काम करने वाले हैं, उनकी क्षमता अच्छी होती है लेकिन उनको समझाना पड़ेगा और मैं आशा करता हूँ कि इस बात का ध्यान रखा जायगा?

ई० डी० एजेन्ट्स की चर्चा बहुत जोरों से की गई।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री लोकनाथ मिश्र) : कुछ मिनिस्टर साहब के लिए भी छोड़ दीजिए।

श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया : मिनिस्टर साहब के लिए तो ओवरसीज़ कम्प्यूनि-केशन है, कम्प्यूनिकेशन डिपार्टमेंट भाग पड़ा हुआ है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री लोकनाथ मिश्र) : आप 35 मिनट ले चुके हैं।

श्री जगन्नाथ पहाड़िया : मदन किशोर कमिटी जो नियुक्त की गई थी, उसने अनेक अन्य सिफारिशों के साथ दो प्रमुख सिफारिशों की थी। एक सिफारिश यह थी कि एक्स्ट्रा डिपार्टमेंटल एजेन्ट्स को काम के अनुपात में उसनी ही वनखवाह मिलनी चाहिए जितनी पी० एन्ड टी० एम्पलाईज को मिलती है। दूसरे उन्होंने कहा कि तीन घंटे के बजाय दो घंटे का काम तय कर देना चाहिए। अगर हम दो घंटे तय करते हैं तो जितना उनको अभी मिलता है उससे भी कम मिलेगा। इसलिए हमने कहा कि जो सिलसिला अभी चल रहा है वही ठीक है। मदन किशोर कमिटी की सिफारिशों को जैसी उन्होंने दी हैं हमने माना नहीं है। हम नहीं चाहते कि हमारी एक्स्ट्रा डिपार्टमेंटल एम्पलाईज का अहित

हों। हम उनका हित करना चाहते हैं। हम आशा करते हैं कि हमने जिस भावना से यह फैसला किया उसी भावना से वे उसको लेंगे।

हमने इस बात का फैसला कर लिया है कि आगे आने वाली पंचवर्षीय योजना के अन्दर 5 हजार पी सी ओ, 7 हजार कम्पाइन्ड पोस्ट आफिसेज टेलिग्राफ बगैरह के खोल जाएंगे। देश की राजधानी दिल्ली को सभी प्रान्तों की राजधानियों से एस टी डी से और प्रान्तों की राजधानियों को जिला हेड-क्वार्टर्स से और जितने बड़े बड़े शहर और प्रोजेक्ट्स हैं उनको टेलिफोन के जरिए, पोस्ट आफिसेज के जरिए जोड़ दिया जाय, इस बात की कोशिश रहेगी।

बड़ी वोटिंग लिस्ट और एक्सेस विलिंग की चर्चा की गई है। उसके बारे में मंत्री महोदय बोलेंगे। हम कोशिश करेंगे कि एक्सेस विलिंग का जो शिकायते हैं वे भविष्य में न आए। इन शब्दों के साथ आपका धन्यवाद।

SHRIMATI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, you are sitting for the first time in the Chair and I want your indulgence for one minute. I will give only two examples, one about the Postal Department and the other about the telephones. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, my surname is Mukherjee. Whatever letter is there in the name of Mukherjee, it comes to my '11-Canning Lane' address. In Calcutta, my name in the telephone directory is along with another Purabi Mukherjee, who is a famous singer. So, I always get my music contracts over the phone and she gets all the applications for the supply of milk and other things. And I get all her letters from her fans saying how beautifully she sings. I hope the Minister in charge will do something for me in this regard.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA (Orissa): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I wish this continues.

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTTA (Nominated): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir I must say I am somewhat a reluctant speaker in the sense that you know I am not one of the most militant Members of this House. And I am also not given to either speaking too often or speaking too strongly. But sometimes despair drives you to desperation and, perhaps, today I decided to speak out of despair. I am not going to speak about the high policies, the high policies have already been covered by all the hon. Members who spoke before me. I should only like to speak a little bit on one or two points from my personal, direct experience.

Sir, the Delhi Telephone, have discovered a novel method of raising the revenues. You can never get the correct number on the first trial.

You go on getting wrong numbers and you pay for all those calls and if you still have any patience or energy left, you may get the correct number after five, six, seven or eight tries. I do not know whether one should congratulate the Ministry of Communications for discovering a method of raising revenues, unknown to the rest of the world, and unknown in any other part of this globe. Sir, I will give you just one instance, a personal instance. I noted it down because I was hoping that some time we will be discussing the Ministry of Communications and I could mention my experience. Sir, I tried to ring up one No. say, 627541, and on response from the other side, I asked is it 627541. Somebody snarled back 'No' and he banged the telephone. I do not blame him because he probably was already so much harassed by the wrong calls that he was getting, that he was losing his patience. Then, Sir, I ultimately tried again very carefully dialling every digit 627541 and I got 625164 and then I wondered whether I should ring up 625164 in order to get 627541 and then, Sir, I mustered—my patience was getting exhausted—strength and courage once again and got 72 Exchange and finally I thought of a bright idea and I rang up 199. The bell went on ringing but nobody took the

[Dr. Vidya Prakash Dutt]
 telephone. After five or ten minutes I again rang up 199. Finally, Sir, after about half an hour, I got 199 and I asked for this number and I was told 'Please hold on'. I kept holding on for ten, fifteen minutes and I thought I was forgotten and so I hang up in utter despair.

Sir, the Telephone Department ritually observes what is called the Courtesy Week. But, at all other times it is discourtesy, unalloyed, unmixed and if you have the temerity to show any impatience then you will be faced with a volley of abuses and all discourtesy.

Sir, the Minister has gone away.

SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA : I am here, he will be just coming.

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT : I was hoping that he would be here because we said that we are speaking from despair and desperation. I am going through 199. Sir, I do not know what the experience of our friends is and what the reports are that our friends are getting. But, I am sure, my friends here, whomsoever I talked to, will bear me out that the state of affairs in the Telephone Department is scandalous, absolutely scandalous, shocking. Sir, I am not given to, as I said earlier, using strong words. Perhaps, my academic background prevents me from using strong words but this is one case in which, I think, there is not a word, which could not be used against the state of affairs that prevails today in the Telephones Department.

What is more amusing, Sir, is that there is a blissful complacency on the part of our Telephone authorities. If you, in fact, mention that there is anything wrong, they are shocked. How can there be anything wrong with the Telephones Department, they think. They feel that there is something wrong with us, in spite of our telling them that there is something wrong there. I appeal through 199 to the Minister, who is not here, to end this scandalous state of affairs in the Delhi Telephones. I do not know about others. I think it is the same state of affairs everywhere. You end this scandalous state of affairs, this, what I would call, total chaotic state of affairs. It never existed before but it is getting worse and worse.

What is the fate of those who try to make trunk calls? If you are not a VIP and if you try to make a trunk call, what happens? First of all, your call is booked with the greatest reluctance. Then, for hours together you will not get any news about your call. Finally you ring up "Information": "What happened to my call which I booked five hours ago or six hours ago?"

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : Or yesterday!

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT : A broken voice tells you, "You ring up the Monitor". So you ring up the Monitor who is rarely available. But if you are lucky enough ...

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : Why do you say "rarely"? He is not available at all!

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT : If you are lucky enough to get the Monitor, as someone has said, a tired and bored voice replies from the other end, "Sorry, all the lines are down; you can't get your call". And if you say then, "Oh! In that case please cancel my call", an audible sigh of relief is there at the other end. In fact, they are most relieved when the calls are cancelled.

Now, this is the state of affairs in the Telephones. This is my personal experience and I have discussed it with my hon. friends. This is the experience of practically every hon. Member of this House about the telephones. Our friend, Mr. Pahadia has given...

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : He must have given the picture of this office only.

SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA : What I said is 100 per cent correct.

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT : I am told that a lot of progress has been made but I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Communications through 199, as I said,...

SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA : Now direct.

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT: It is becoming impossible. You spend all your energy all day trying to get one or two telephone numbers.

SHRI S. P. GOŚWAMI. On 174 also you do not get response.

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT: I read the other day that soon there will be a direct dialling system between Delhi-London-New York and I was hoping there will soon be a direct dialling system in Delhi itself so that before we can directly dial London we can directly dial Delhi, this city itself!

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: You can dial Aryabhata but not Daryaganj!

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT: Sir, I read a charming article on the telephones and it is so correct that I hope you will permit me to read one paragraph out of it. The author is one Usha Talwar—I do not know who she is—but I would like to read one paragraph out of it.

She says:

"Sometime ago the Union Minister for Communications informed Parliament that 5.3 lakh applicants were on the waiting list for telephones. When I read this my heart overflowed with sympathy for the prospective subscribers. Their ignorance is truly colossal. What disenchantment awaits them when they happen to possess the precious telephone! But, perhaps, man is under an eternal curse to be longing for what he does not have. Those not having telephones are keen to lose their present stage of bliss. That explains the staggering queue for telephones to which more numbers are being added everyday. Over the years a metamorphosis has been quietly taking place in the telephones in India. It used to be a utility, it now appears to be an acquisition and a very costly one too. It has become more of a status symbol I am half tempted to disconnect the telephone at my house from the line and carry it with me wherever I go. Those possessing jewels parade them wherever they go as bill-boards of their station in life. Can't I display mine, my dear, dear telephone?"

Sir, this is the actual state of affairs because the telephone now is there not to be used really but it is a status symbol, something that you possess in your house.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: Decoration.

DR. VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT: I do not want to go into this further I have made the point that I wanted to make. I know, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma is a very understanding person, a man of wide experience. Mr. Pahadia has also a lot of experience, he is a young man like me, and I hope they will act to end the scares of the telephone system. I do not know of the things that my friend over there said. How far they are true I have no inside information of that. He gave a lot of information. Perhaps some of it was overdone but I think he did give a lot of information and I do know that unless the Ministers themselves intervene, unless they take personal interest in these matters, it will not be done through the bureaucracy that they have.

Sir, I would not have normally spoken on Communications but I spoke out of desperation to appeal to the Minister to kindly look into all this. I have only one more point to make. That is on a slightly different plain. We have talked so much about friendship with Bangladesh. I remember, there was a time when an agreement was signed or at least a declaration was made that there will be a microwave link between Dacca and Calcutta. Today the situation is that every second day I am told there is complete breakdown of communications between Calcutta and Dacca. While we are having these microwave systems extended to areas, I do not know of what use they would be, here is an essential place where they should have put up two microwave systems. Even though the Prime Ministers of the two countries have agreed to this, still for the last three years I believe nothing is being done. I hope this question will be taken up.

Finally I would like to say that there seems to be a total breakdown of communication in our country between person and person, between party and party and between instrument and instrument. Now Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, I do not want to

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blame him for the breakdown of communication between person and person and party and party but I do hope that he can restore the communication between instrument and instrument so that at least what meant to be an efficient system of communicating with each other will somehow be made usable again.

Thank you.

SHRI C. K. DAPHTARY (Nominated):

Sir, I have just arrived and heard the last speaker complain of the difficulties which he undergoes as a subscriber to the telephone. Not that he pays for it any more than I do for my calls but we have the pleasure or the doubtful pleasure of being annoyed and frustrated for nothing whereas other people pay for that, that is the only difference. Sir, I do not know if anyone has pointed out yet that the whole trouble is due to overloading. The systems are not capable of bearing. I am on a particular system at Okhla Exchange. The system was installed about five years ago and I complained within the first six months of its installation to the then Minister, Mr. Bahuguna, to look into this. Sir, the cross-bar system has been tried out in other countries and has failed completely. It has failed in this country, it has failed in the country of its origin and yet even after discovery of its failure, this system has been installed in other places of India. I am told so much machinery was ordered from the Bangalore factory, but they used it up. Then I was assured that something was being done to remedy the matter. Nothing can be done; no remedying can be done. It is entirely marginal, and that marginal benefit is done away with by the simple fact that the Ministry insists upon loading their exchanges, particularly the Okhla exchange and similar exchanges with cross-bar, with more lines than they can bear. Supposing, Sir, the rated capacity of an exchange is one thousand lines, the usual thing is to fix about 900 to 950 lines on it, but as it is, it is about 1200 to 1500 lines and still more are being put. Then what is the result? The result is that from time to time the telephone goes dead, at least four or five times in a day and for half an hour at least the telephone is completely silent. You cannot get a number, nobody can get you. At the same time, more and more

lines are being given. The result is that for the past five years, this particular system, the Belgium cross-bar system in Okhla Exchange, in Parliament Street Exchange, and in Bombay at one or two places, has not worked satisfactorily. Far from being satisfactory, it is disgraceful, and it has no hope of being remedied so long as the Ministry keeps on piling more lines. I am told the Belgium people were asked to come. They sent a team. What report they made about five years ago, we do not know. I do not think they acknowledge liability of breakdown of the system. I am sure they do not. We have not the pleasure of knowing what the report was. I have been told repeatedly that they are trying to improve it, they are trying to improve it. But instead of improving, on the contrary, for the last six months the system has gone worse and worse. I am out of communication with the rest of the world for a whole day. People complain that they cannot get my number. I complain to them that I cannot get their numbers.

One of the diseases not mentioned by the hon'ble Member who spoke last, is that you pick up the phone to make a call, as soon as you get to talk, the phone gets cut off. Again you do it, but again the same thing happens—it again gets cut off. Leave aside the question that the subscriber has to pay for two calls, the annoyance is tremendous, and you have to spend, as the hon'ble Member put it, half an hour of your time to get a number. That is all right for a person who has got a Secretary or P.A. Otherwise, it is frustrating and annoying. The hon'ble Member said that he did not like to use strong words, but I do use the strong words. The system is in utter disgrace.

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE (Maharashtra): Sir, I would like to take the opportunity of mentioning some of the points. Sir, in the first place, about the public telephones, now we are required to have three coins. Unless we have three coins, we cannot make use of the public telephone, and at times it will be difficult to get three coins. So my first suggestion is: Would it not be possible for the Ministry to have some other machine where we could make use of only one coin? At present, you are required to pay 30 paise. That is also somewhat higher rate. My suggestion is that instead of 30 paise it

should be 25 paise, so that instead of three coins one coin would be used. That would save us the trouble of searching for the coins as it happens normally when we want to contact our telephone from airport. The second point I would like to mention is, no doubt the telephone is meant for big people but at times poor people also need to use the telephone and it has been found that those who have got the telephone at their place, decline the outsiders to make use of the telephone. I just wanted to know whether there are existing rules by which a subscriber cannot disallow a person to make use of the telephone. It is necessary that some such rules should be evolved by which a subscriber should not be allowed to refuse the use of the telephone by an outsider. That is one suggestion because it so happens somebody, a poor man, may have to speak to someone to convey some urgent message and if he goes to the big man having a telephone in his big building somewhere inside, he says: No, I will not allow you to use my telephone. Therefore, if a big man with his money could afford to have a telephone, at least a poor man should be able to get an opportunity to make use of the telephone when he needs.

My other suggestion is, I think you have evolved some priority basis for allotment of telephones. Could you think of allotment of a telephone on a priority basis where the man agrees that an outsider could also have access to his telephone? It is just a suggestion. If he agrees that he will keep the telephone at a place where outsiders also will have access to it, he could be allotted the telephone.

The other point is, people make profit out of it. I know there are hotels where they charge one rupee for a telephone call, at some places you are required to pay 50 paise. I just want to know whether under the present rules, you have laid down that in no case he will charge for a call what is reasonably due. I think since we are required to pay 30 paise on the public telephones, everybody should be compelled to charge only 30 paise for a call and not more.

Then, Sir, about the delivery of letters. I can just give one experience I had. It is

only 8 days back that I got one letter returned to me which was addressed to Mr. R. S. Gaveri, Deputy Chairman, Maharashtra Legislative Council, Saranga, Bombay. The address is written in English. Saranga is a big building opposite Bombay Secretariat where High Court Judges, Ministers and Deputy Ministers live. I cannot understand why this letter has been returned to me. I cannot believe that Saranga building could not be located by the postman and then it could not have been difficult to find out such a high officer as Deputy Chairman.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Was it inadequately stamped?

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE: Not inadequately stamped.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: If it was inadequately stamped, it would have been delivered. One of the methods of sure delivery is inadequate stamps.

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE: Sometimes matters are very important and the person is under the impression that the letter must have been delivered. At times it may lead to disastrous results. Sometimes there are very important matters. You can realise there may be a love letter also, a young man who writes a letter, will be all along under the impression that the letter must have been delivered and he would be expecting a reply but the reply does not come because the letter was not delivered. So it may lead to misunderstanding that might be created because of non-delivery of letters. Therefore, delivery of the letters is of very paramount importance and the postman and the supervisory staff must see that letters are delivered in time. In this particular case that I mentioned, I cannot understand why the letter has been returned to me. It could be neglect on the part of the postman but then there are supervisory staff. They should also see and examine why the letter has not gone to the addressee.

The other point is, the honourable Deputy Minister at the outset spoke about the role of the Minister of Communications. He says that he is meant for back-

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ward areas. He is also meant for backward classes. I thought that he must say something about the backward classes. He has not made even a passing reference to the problem of Backward Classes. This is one of the biggest public sector undertakings wherein as many as or more than six lakh workers are employed. The figure given is 6,29,275. I suppose, next to the Railways, this is one of the biggest public sector undertaking. As has been pointed out by my friends, Mr. Dhabe and Dr. Kurian, I also fail to understand this figure of 2,08,938 extra departmental staff. The Report does not specify what this category is and how this category is distinguishable from the other categories. We can understand workers who are regular employees. We can understand workers who are casual employees. We can understand workers who are temporary employees, but I have not come across such a term that is being used and which is not understandable, i.e., extra departmental staff. I wanted to know it from my hon. friend, Mr. Dhabe, an eminent trade unionist and he said that this is a new term that is being used.

SHRI NAND KISHORE BHATT: It is there before, ever since the British days.

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE: As I understand it—I am subject to correction—they are not treated as regular employees. They are not being paid the wages and salaries which are paid to the regular departmental employees. What is the point in having such a large number, two lakh employees, compelling them to work under conditions which cannot be said to be fair and just? You speak about social justice. Your undertaking has a moral duty . . .

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: Their service conditions are the same. He cannot participate in elections or he cannot apply for nomination. His service conditions are the same.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI LOKANATH MISRA): I think generally school teachers are in the same category.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: Now this is full-time for lakhs of people.

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE: I would like to know the position. . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI LOKANATH MISRA): Mr. Kumbhare, you should try to finish. There is another speaker and then the Minister will reply.

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE: I just want to know whether there is a separate wage structure for these extra departmental people. Is there such a structure for others? If not, why do you want to pay them less when the conditions are identical? I suppose it is unjust and unfair. When you speak about social justice, you must do justice to those people who are in the lowest rung of the services.

Then, I would like to refer to the problem of reservations in services. It was expected that Mr. Pahadia who also represents the weaker sections, would deal with this problem. Probably the hon. Minister may say something about it. My submission is that, in the first place, Government orders are there for providing reservations in the initial recruitment and also in promotions. There have been a number of complaints that this Department is not following the rules regarding reservation in the matter of recruitment and promotions. I want to know how much is the representation in the various classes and categories and whether they are adequately represented in the services or not. If they are not adequately represented, I would like to know whether the Department would take special steps to see that their representation is improved and the fixed percentage of 15 per cent and 7½ per cent is attained. Sir, we could see that some of the employees are sent abroad for training; some foreign assignments are also given. I would like to know whether the Government has taken any steps to see that this weaker section, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are also accorded opportunities in all these foreign assignments and training.

Then, there are so many sub-committees. I would like to know whether your department takes care to see that even this class of people are also represented.

About accommodation, there is a Government directive that 10 per cent of the

accommodation should be provided for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. I would like to know from the Minister whether that directive is being followed or not.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the report for 1974-75 that has been given to us by this Ministry appears to be a very sketchy report. The report as such contains nothing about the P & T services in this country. Sir, lot of technological things, overseas communication services etc., are referred to in this report. But so far as we in this country are concerned, we are concerned with the running of the P & T services. That is conspicuous by its absence in this report.

Sir, this report refers to a brochure that is being delivered to us by the Directorate General of Posts and Telegraphs in regard to the post and telegraph services. It was delivered to us along with this and we had to collect the same. And collecting the same we find that the annual report of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department for 1973-74 is handed over to us. It is found from this book that this report for 1973-74 is printed in March 1975. Sir, it is not stated in this report as to what will be given to us, whether it would be the report for 1973-74. We thought that the report for 1974-75 would be given. But whether it be for 1973-74 or 1974-75 the only good thing that I have been able to find in this report of the P. & T. Department is very good prints of the commemorative stamps in 1973-74 that the P. & T. Department has issued.

Sir, ladies working in the Parliament Post Office counter, who are undoubtedly very obliging and very kind give us lot of commemorative stamps. I feel that the issue of commemorative stamps appears to be, by and large, the main work of P. & T. Department as will be seen from this report. I do not know whether the Department has degraded itself to this position only. But even in this degraded position, my submission, Sir, is that they are not doing justice. Commemorative stamps have been issued for various purposes, national, States, regional and local. Sir, if was only the other day that the Prime

Minister herself came all the way to Kerala to inaugurate the golden jubilee celebrations of the Vaikyum Satyagraha. I am shocked and surprised to find that the P. & T. Department has not chosen to issue a commemorative stamp in respect of the Vaikyum Satyagraha so far. Sir, these things have got to be noted because even the emphasis that they have given in this report is a one-sided emphasis which does not bring in impartiality or justice so far as all aspects of the country are concerned.

Very strong criticisms has been made on the floor of this House in regard to the working of the telephone department. And criticism has been made on various other facets also. I would say, Sir, that the department has very largely grown after independence. The growth of this department has been on a massive scale, but certain essential matters which ought to have been taken care of, have not been taken into account so far as this department is concerned. I would say that failure has been there not only in the telephone department, but failure is there and has been there in the postal services and in the telegraph services also. It is common knowledge now that if one sends a telegram, the telegram will reach only after four days, and there is no discrimination made by the department whether it is an express telegram or an ordinary telegram. And if it is a VIP who complains, he will get a reply after three weeks along with a refund voucher, asking him to go to the nearest post office and Collect Rs. 2.40 or whatever it is. If it is a non-VIP, and the large number of complainants are unfortunately of non-VIPs he does not receive any reply even by way of courtesy. So far as postal articles are concerned, missing of letters and non-delivery of letters are very largely on the increase. There are reasons for that. These reasons ought to have been enquired into by the department and the defects remedied. Particularly there are certain places in this country—in fact, recently I had brought it to the notice of the hon. Minister for Communications, and I do not want to repeat it in the House—where if letters are posted, they never go out. Letters are not delivered. A lot of malpractices are occurring. Sir, I would attribute, by and large, two fundamental reasons for

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the failure in the telephone service, in the telegraph service and in the postal service. There are two fundamental grounds for the all-round failure, all-round weakness and all-round bad performance of this department. Firstly, take the question of employer-employee relations that has been referred to by a large number of hon. Members. If there is any one single department of the Central Government whose staff have been victimised to an extent to which the staff have not been victimised in any other department of the Central Government, it is the staff of the P. & T. Department. What is the reason? It is not a thing which has occurred during one year or two years. It has occurred during the decades past, in the years after independence. Shamefully we have to admit it, Sir, the staff of this department have been treated in a humiliating and insulting manner by the officers, by the Central Government by its directives. And what has been the role of the staff of the P. & T. Department in the trade union movement of this country, in the movement of the Central Government employees for their organisation, for their demands being met by the Government? Sir, the P. & T. Department staff have shown that they constituted the best, the most effective and the strongest trade union in this country. Today comparable with them are perhaps the bank employees or the railway employees or the staff of the various Accountant-General offices in the country or the staff under the Comptroller and Auditor-General or three or four other categories who are very strongly united and trade union minded among the various departments of the Central Government. The attitude at the Government level and ministerial level has been that the staff should be treated in a manner in which they should be put to a desperate situation and the result has been that the industrial relations have been very bad. This has been so in the P & T Department and on account of that what all should be expected of the staff so far as performance is concerned, has not been performed and could not be performed and will not be performed so long as the industrial relations are bad.

Another fundamental reason in regard to mal-functioning of the services in this

Department, if I may put it, is the horribly inadequate staffing in these services. The Department has grown like anything and accordingly the staff have not been strengthened. The telephone users and very hon. Members of this House have raised their strong voice against the way in which the telephone people behave. Of course, so far as the mal-functioning of the instrument is concerned, much has already been said and I do not propose to deal with that aspect. But little do people know that on many occasions there is very inadequate staff in the various telephone exchanges and that whether you call 185, 183, 187 or 181 in certain hours it is one and the same person who answers your call. Naturally on very large occasions, you will never get any response because the same person has to move from place to place. For this reason the person at the other end gets offended because he does not know what happens in the exchange and there is no television to show him what happens in the exchange. There is, thus, inadequate staffing in almost all the exchanges (*Time bell rings.*) I will take a few more minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI LOKANATH MISRA): Kindly finish by six.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: I understand that. I am not the person who will go against the Chair's direction. This is the first time I am speaking when you are in the Chair. I have got great respect for you and I will never go against you.

May I, therefore, say that this question of staffing should also be taken into account very seriously.

One of the finest speeches that I heard today was that of my friend Shri Lakshmanan. His speech was very constructive and educative. But I was sad when Shri Kameshwar Singh spoke. He was a member of my Party in the previous Lok Sabha, but he is now in the ruling Party. I thought that the education and instruction that we gave him would stand him in good stead. He has spoken as if he is a member of the Opposition sitting in the ruling benches. I do not share many of his criticisms.

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH: I said how Government officers are hindering the Government from implementing their policies and misguiding the Minister. I never criticised any of the Government's policies. This is for your kind information.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: Anyhow, sitting in the opposition benches, I do not share the way in which he has put things and the general approach he has made and the criticisms that he has made, even though I am strongly of the view along with my very honourable and esteemed friend Mr. Daphtary and Prof. Dutt, that we have gone very much in the wrong by going for the cross-bar system.

6 P.M.

There is no doubt about it. The Crossbar system has failed in this country and it has failed in other countries and it is bound to fail in this country on account of the particular climatic condition in our country and it can never work here. We have got to see that we replace it completely and we have got to write off the amount that we have spent on these things. If ever the telephone subscriber in this country is to get the service, I have no doubt in my mind that this has to be done today or tomorrow it will have to be done. But I am not prepared to put the guilt or blame on a particular officer in a personal manner. Certainly not. These are decisions taken at a very high level and sometimes the decisions go wrong and wrong decisions create losses and result in losses. I am putting it, Sir, this way that so far as these services are concerned, unless these two aspects, these two fundamental aspects, are looked into, these things will not solve the problem.

Two or three points more and I am done, Sir. The state of affairs in the RMS offices and in the Mail Vans is absolutely hopeless so far as the staff position is concerned. Many of the RMS Offices in this country are located in buildings where no office can function. These are very bad buildings and there is very little and very bad accommodation and there is no possibility of supervision of the work carried on there and there is the consequential danger on account of the non-supervision of the work and on account of the very

inadequate accommodation. Sir, so far as the Mail Vans are concerned, we are still in the Victorian age. Improvements have been made in almost everything so far as the railways are concerned. My honourable friend, Dr. Mathew Kurian, referred to Mr. P. C. Lal and the way in which he treats the postal services. I refer to the Railways and the way in which the postal services are treated by them. There is absolutely no co-ordination at all. In many places I have found that for one or two minutes they are prepared to detain the trains for other purposes, but not for the purposes of the P & T service. I have myself seen such instances in certain places where I myself made requests to the authorities concerned that the trains be detained so that the RMS can take the mail bags. But the Railways are not even prepared to do that. Now, take the railway wagons. We have now got all sorts of wagons coming out of the Integral Coach Factory at Perambur. But the RMS Vans have not been improved at all. These RMS Vans are in the 19th century state only and it is impossible to work in these Mail Vans. Sir, I am a person believing in a particular ideology and I am against the First Class air-conditioned carriages although I am prepared to accept the present Second Class air-conditioned carriages. But I would only say that if at all the carriages on railways are to be air-conditioned, it is the Mail Van only and they are to be air-conditioned and only after the Mail Vans are air-conditioned, the Second Class carriages are to be air-conditioned and the Second Class air-conditioned carriages which are coming out of Perambur now should be used. So, Sir, this order of priority should be accorded by the Communications Minister and the Railway Minister and then only you can expect efficiency in the Railway Mail Service.

Sir, one more thing and I will finish. Sir, it is with regard to the P & T Manual and the P & T Rules. These are absolutely outmoded and many of them are only administrative or executive instructions and a lot of time is, of course, spent on the question of the justiciability of the cases of violation of these administrative or executive instructions. But few of them are rules issued under the proviso to article 309 of the Constitution. I do not

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 know why, even though article 309 stipulates that a parliamentary enactment should be there in respect of the Central Services, no parliamentary enactment has been made in respect of the Central Services in all these 26 years. Sir, Kerala is the first State which has shown the way and there is the Kerala Public Services Enactment of 1968. My party also was in office in Kerala then. In any case, whether there is a Central Act or not, the P & T Manual and the P & T Rules must be revised and a Committee should be set up early for the modernisation of these things. Thank you, Sir.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI S. D. SHARMA): Mr Vice-Chairman, Sir. I am really thankful to the Members who participated in the debate. I was really happy that the Rajya Sabha has kindly cared to discuss the P & T Department. The reason is obvious. It is not that I did not know that there would be criticism of the Postal and Telecommunication services. That is obvious. I am thankful because it brought into focus the importance of the Postal and Telecommunication services in the development of the country. And here I am happy that there was complete unanimity about the need to develop faster and provide better services in both Postal and Telecommunication sides. This has become at times important because in administration, often we find a situation where some people take a view that some of these things are not so very essential.

Now, as I said in the beginning, I am fully conscious of the shortcomings, both in the postal side and in the telecommunication side. But, as was pointed out by one of the Members, the remedy lies not in the Rules or orders or disciplinary actions only, but in greater interest in the services by the State Governments, the people and the people's representatives.

So far as the postal side is concerned, we have tried to develop as fast as we could. So far as the cost is concerned, the cost has been growing. But we have avoided raising the postal rates, which is as it should be. As much as we can, we will try to avoid raising them, in spite of the fact that ours are the cheapest and the lowest rates. As for performance, we see

in Britain where they charge 9 pence for second-class mail, the performance, according to statistics, is that mail is delivered in two days. Delivery even in the tiny island of Britain is 82 per cent, where the charges are 9 pence. But that does not justify the delays so far as we are concerned. As you know, Sir, human factor is involved and mistakes do take place. The gigantic work that has to be carried on for carrying the mail is stupendous because of transportation problems. Sometimes we have to depend—and naturally we depend—on planes to carry the mail. We have to depend upon the railway services, the air services, and that is why sometimes we get criticism.

For instance, I was told that we have provided 'Next Day Service', 'Quick Mail Service' in Madras or Bombay or Hyderabad, but not in Calcutta. I was conscious of it. But we have to depend, for the carrying of our ordinary mail, on the Ministry of Civil Aviation. I have been pleading with them to re-start night airmail service. On our pleading, they agreed to have a late flight service and early morning service. We have tried to utilize it, and we have worked out a scheme, and I am happy that we expect to start this from 1st of June to Calcutta also. But as you will see, it is a make-shift arrangement. We have evolved the pin-code system whereby the time taken for moving the mail from one place to another is saved because of the pin-code and separate bags. We are trying to improve things as much as we can. I know that at times the letters are delayed. There is congestion and there is delay in the delivery of letters. During Puja holidays or during Dussehra and Dewali Greetings, there was a position when it could be said that certain post offices became so clogged with important mail in the key city of Calcutta that letters were taking several weeks to arrive. I think you will agree that that will be the correct description of what happened in Calcutta and some of the other centres during that period. Of course, other factors were also involved. There was the question of overtime also. Overtime was stopped by a fiat. Naturally, we have to have flexibility in that. Sometimes we have to go in for overtime. If there are positions vacant in a telephone exchange, we

may have to go in for overtime. If the trains are delayed, RMS has got to be paid. If there is rush, we have got to go in for this thing. It may interest you to know that what I said was not said about the Indian conditions. This was told about Central London in June last. It was not said by somebody who wants to decry the British Postal Service, but by a publication called *Europa*, a monthly, which is published in conjunction with *Le Monde*, *Times* and other important magazines. We are trying to improve that difficulty.

It was justifiably said that there are regional imbalances. It is because of the history and the way we developed. There are areas where there is a large number of post offices. Anyway, we find that a post office serves an area of 11 sq. kilometers in one area and 70 sq. kilometers in another area. I can assure my friend, Sardar Amjad Ali from West Bengal that there is no motive behind it and in this many States stand on the same footing. Perhaps, Bengal is slightly better than Madhya Pradesh which I happen to represent.

DR. RAMKRIPAL SINHA: Bihar also.

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: The position is that somehow the northern area has remained behind in postal and telecommunication development. Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are all in the same position. The same thing applies to Bengal, Assam, Orissa and other areas also. We have got to see that these imbalances are removed. But one cannot do it by a fiat. It is not possible to open post offices quickly. The estimate is that our losses for the postal services will be above 32 crores of rupees this year. Next year, it is expected that the losses will be above 52 crores. So, naturally it is not possible. We do want that these imbalances should go. But it is not possible. Post Offices should be opened where they are necessary. Though there was a ban, we are trying to work out a formula by which we may be able to provide this. I have thought of one thing which Mr Pahadia mentioned. One way to help the Postal Department is to induce the people to go in more for postal saving bank accounts. Because, in the formula that has been agreed to between ourselves and

the Finance Ministry, two things happen. Postal entries will increase. If a large number of accounts are opened in the rural areas, we get payment on the entries and naturally, with those entries there, the deficit goes down. The other advantage which I would like to point out is that it has been agreed that in every State, whatever comes in the postal savings, two-thirds of it will be advanced to the State for developmental work. This is one of the ways by which, really speaking, we can mop up some money from the rural areas and which can go to the development in the State itself. And it has been done in one of the States. Mr. Bahuguna, about whom so much was talked, has done it in his State. In the last three months—January, February and March—a drive was launched in the rural areas for opening new postal accounts and getting money deposited in the postal savings accounts. He had put a target of Rs. 80 crores. He succeeded in having new accounts opened for Rs. 75 crores. He went about it in a very big way. And, naturally, this helps. I am mentioning it because it can be a very good thing in which the State will gain, and the postal services will also gain because we will be able to start more post offices.

Now, so far as the upgrading is concerned from the EDPO to sub-post office there is a rule that when the work increases, that will also help in changing that. We are also working out new formulae by which we will be able to open more post offices. We are making it liberal so far as the backward areas are concerned, so far as the hill areas are concerned, and so far as the tribal areas are concerned. There is a regular drive in that direction. But I cannot promise that we will be able to do very much.

Then, Sir, came some sort of criticism about philately or the stamps we issue. It's not that this is the only thing we are doing. But, I think, you will agree with me that if something good is done in the country, there is nothing wrong in talking about it. And you will agree with that in philately, we have come up very well. Some of our recent stamps have won worldwide recognition, for instance our latest bird series, where we got

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birds chosen, the colours chosen and the art chosen with the help of a specialist, Dr. Ali. And we went about the scheme. It is amongst the best bird stamps ever issued. It's not that this is the only thing. But it is an important feature. It gives an image of our country that we are able to produce these technical things and that technically we are up to anybody in the world. So, you will not mind because, if something good is done, let us talk about that also. When we talk about it, what is wrong about it? And it is also essential that the fault is pointed out. And the number also, we have increased. Last year, we issued 28 stamps. We are going to issue 45 stamps. The only thing is, there is limitation because of the capacity of the Security Printing Press, and the need of its coming to a particular standard. But we are trying to do our bit. And I may tell you that we are gaining recognition in the world philatelic exhibitions. For instance, in the recent exhibition in Spain, all the stamps we took there were sold out and we got an SOS to send more which we got sent through the diplomatic bag as early as we could. So, naturally, some foreign exchange is earned. And recognition we got. So, I just mentioned it by the way.

So far as the postal side is concerned, we are trying to bring in more and more improvement. Now the tele-communications is one thing about which a great deal has been talked about. One thing is the waiting list. The waiting list is growing and is surpassing all our calculations and projections. Even the Pathak Committee's projections have proved wrong because the number in the waiting list is rising a great deal, I think, because of more consciousness and more education and it is a sign of more awareness and it is necessary with the economic development that this should happen. For instance, in Bombay, the waiting list is nearly 162 thousand and I am told that out of this about 110 or 112 thousand are under the O.Y.T. Delhi has got a waiting list of about 105 thousand. Now that problem remains and I agree with Mr. Daphtary that we should not lead our exchanges so much but sometimes when the pressure is too much we have to

make some concessions and we have to proceed on the basis of 'from no telephones' to some telephones'.

Now, there has been a lot of talk about the crossbar. Here, I would like to make one thing clear. Let us not confuse crossbar with the crossbar system that we purchased. Now, some people have said that it has failed in the country of its origin. It is not in one country. The crossbar system has been developed by different countries and it is working well in those countries and, at the moment, the lines on the crossbar system are almost equal to, if not more than, the lines on the Strowger system. But the problem is that what we did was we purchased the benta conta crossbar, which is I.T.T. developed and there too we purchased it from a subsidiary of the I.T.T.D., the Belgian subsidiary, and then it created complications. It was done pursuant to an agreement reached on the 21st May, 1964. So, it all takes time. As a result, we are having difficulties. The Belgians came, they saw and we discussed and I may tell you that our engineers, our young engineers, are doing excellent work in the sense that they brought about improvements on what we got, which came to about 200 improvements per line. Though the Belgians had to accept the improvements that were necessary in order that it may come up to the mark and they have paid us for the improvements which had to be brought about, but payment does not satisfy, the problem remains, the problem becomes much more serious when you know that the telephone lines are working. Now, when they are working, when you go for improvements, it creates more complications and, at the present moment, we are in that funny situation because we cannot close down any particular telephone exchange and then have these improvements done and then reopen it. What actually happens is that these lines go on working and in between these improvements are also being carried out and the net result is that sometimes you get the service and sometimes not. But, till 100 per cent improvements are done, it does not help. Just now I got information from the Department that in some exchanges 98 per cent improvements have been done, in some 92 per cent and in some 76 per

cent. According to me, it does not take us far. It is only when we have thought about all the changes that are necessary that they will be able to work.

Let us not confuse crossbar as such because crossbar, as I said earlier, is like the internal combustion engine. Any internal combustion engine is used in Mercedes and in Ambassador cars. But, we do not condemn one because of the other. It all depends upon what system has been used and here again we are using the Erikson system. Erikson is the Swedish system which is not only being accepted in Western Europe but the licence for which has been taken by the East Europeans also and it is being developed there. The Japanese system, there again, they have developed it in different ways. I would say our own crossbar system, because now I say that the crossbar system as it is operating, is, or, which is coming up and which will be in operation and use after, say, a year or so—because even installation of these exchanges takes time—is India's own. It is India's own—you will be happy to know it—and that is why I talked more about it and the crossbar system has been found better than others. And we have won a global tender in Surinam for selling our crossbar system against I.T.T. itself, because they found that our system was better and more suitable.

I may add one more thing. Now the world itself is moving from Strowger to crossbar and from crossbar, and some countries have moved already, to electronic control or store programme and mechanical switching. Some others have gone for completely electronic systems. Naturally we would like to reach that stage and I am happy to say that our Research and Development unit has done excellent work. We have produced a prototype of a completely electronic exchange. Naturally it is not coming tomorrow. We will try it; there will be rigorous trials. It may take even two years, but we are at it and it is a step further. We are moving farther and faster. Naturally it is very costly and there the main trouble comes.

A very important question was raised by one of my friends here: Why are you importing? That is something which

strikes me also because on the one hand we are able to produce also. But the thing is, even the Pathak Committee has accepted it, what we get on the investment is 19 per cent which is the highest one can ever get.

So far as our public sector undertakings under the Communications Ministry are concerned, I am happy to say that they are doing exceedingly well. We are able to produce things of quality but the basic question which arises is initial investment. The other thing, is, for whatever is to be produced, there must be budget provision for the P. & T. Department to utilise it. If as a result of whatever has been here or whatever the Pathak Committee has said, the department could get more money, I have absolutely no doubt that we can produce much more and meet the requirements. As has been pointed by one of my friends here—I do not want to repeat, but—we are going in for very sophisticated things also. Today I can say that given the opportunity, my engineers, Indian telecommunication engineers can produce the most sophisticated equipment which any other country can. We are not only producing what others also are producing but we are moving ahead also. For instance, the various systems we have developed. You must have seen—it has been talked about very much and I may repeat it—our electric typewriter. I think my department deserves credit for that. We got the Letter of Intent in December, 1973 and we produced the typewriter in 1975, with our own know-how while other firms which had been given foreign collaboration were not able to produce it. It is competitive in price and performance. It is cheaper than the imported one. Also we have been able to compete and won global tenders in the transmission of television pictures through underground cables. Our engineers have done it. Our engineers have been able to produce things. We have gone in for new techniques. But the whole difficulty is, lack of money comes in the way. But I do not believe in giving up. In spite of constraints of finance, we are trying to improve and profit more and that is where we have tried to work with manual system. Though the manual system is more costly and is not as satisfactory as this, we have decided that in certain cases we will work

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with the manual system, and so that in the hope for the best we do not lose the good things, we produce more manual boards and use those which are released in smaller exchanges for other purposes. We are planning to provide 2,00,000 connections this year. That will not solve the problem but it will slightly improve the situation because the earlier estimate of our taking a backlog of 6,50,000 will go to about a million. This is the position in spite of all the efforts that we may make and this is the position not only in this country but in the whole world. France, for instance, has got a waiting list of a million people, waiting to get their connections. Our friend Professor Dutt has gone but Mr. Daphtary is here. I will just read out about a very well advanced country. The classic joke about the French telephone system is that half of the population is waiting for a telephone to be installed while the other half is waiting for a dialling tone. This is not about India, not about Calcutta or about Delhi. (Interruptions). I can read out for other countries also but this is the classic joke and it is not written for us.

Just now there was a complaint about misdialling. Calculations have been made that 10 per cent of the calls in Europe are misdialled. The other development which should have come in in the increasing use is the push-button telephone. Engineers claim, when the push-button telephone is in widespread use the public will come to believe much more rightly in the efficiency of the telephone system, for it is estimated that 10 per cent of all calls are misdialled. So, 10 per cent is the average of the misdialled telephones in European Common Market countries. It is because sometimes we do not want to wait for it to come back but the interesting part is, they are talking about push-button while we have already produced push-button telephones. Some people say that it is just like going in for cosmetics but we know that it is an improvement. So, I am not saying that the things should not improve. Things must improve but when you get angry you may remember that you are in the good company of all the users of telephone throughout the world. You are not somebody separate from others.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: This is equally a good joke, Mr. Minister.

DR. RAMKRIPAL SINHA: I think you stop reading such journals because you will be learning bad things from them.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: What is that journal?

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: It is the 'Europa'. I just wanted to tell you about other countries because there has been a criticism made about us and as I said in the beginning, we want to do better, we want to produce better results and various attempts have been made in this direction.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: 'Attempts' means instead of 10 per cent, it will be 20 per cent now.

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: That is for you to decide. Anyway, coming to the other question about the microwave and co-axial systems, we are trying to go ahead with these systems in a big way. We have even gone in for importing but we are also producing. In order that we may be able to provide this system in certain areas we have gone in for importing from Canada and from Hungary but our I.T.I. is also producing in a big way. Our new factory at Naini has started producing for transmission and they are producing well. Then, so far as the other things are concerned we are trying to develop. Along with the latest developments that we are taking up both in co-axial and micro-wave systems, there are certain bottlenecks. Sometimes, the bottlenecks have been there. So far as the microwave is concerned, we have not been able to fulfil our targets because the towers became the bottleneck. We could not get the towers manufactured at the right time. We have now decided to go in and develop our own factories for production of the microwave towers also, because depending on others was not found suitable. So, that way, with more of microwave and co-axial coming, naturally the difficulties will be lessened. Of course, sometimes, so far as the trunk dialling is concerned, or trunk calls are concerned, the problem comes up because largely we have to go with open wire, and there unfortunately the copper wires are stolen—the House

knows about it; you have passed a Bill which is to be passed by the Lok Sabha, providing more stringent punishment for theft, for keeping them and using them. But there it is. We went in for aluminium wires, but unfortunately we have now found that even aluminium wires are being stolen. The only thing is to go in for copper well. That may not be stolen. We are trying it. There are certain other factors.

Then we were talking about the human factor. That is also very important. So far as the human factor is concerned, I do not agree that always the use of rod or punishment is the only solution. I always feel that the telephone operators and others are human beings like ourselves. We must all work together. Their difficulties must be solved. As I said, if there is shortage of staff, over time allowance must be given, staff must be appointed, and if trained people are not properly trained, inservice training must be provided, they must be technically trained. All these things will have to be done, and with it a different approach in which, I am sure, all of us can be helpful, viz. that they may have grievances with the Government, but since this is some service which concerns the public, let that be done properly. Let them fight the Government, if necessary, which I hope will not be necessary because I can say one thing, that our approach is a human approach. Whatever may have been said, we have not thought in terms of victimising or harming them. Sometimes the difficulties are there because of the leadership and rivalries. People go to courts of law. Many times when you want to do a thing, you cannot do it because the court injunctions are there. I do not want to go into detail because I find in some cases there are court injunctions.

DR K. MATHEW KURIAN (Kerala): Mr Minister, the High Court of Kerala gave a ruling that so and so should be taken back, but your Ministry went on appeal. So far as victimisation is concerned, a number of cases are in your hands

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: I am coming to that. My friend, we should understand

that a case decision is not only a decision about a particular point, but sometimes more vital legal issues are involved on which it is essential to get the verdict of the highest court. I am not pre-judging the whole thing, but I cannot say this way or that way. The whole thing will have to be looked into. But I can say one thing, that any question of penalising or victimising is something which is farthest from the mind of all of us because we know that...

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: What about victimisation that already exists? What is the point of making a general statement when victimisation has been imposed by your Ministry? Why not withdraw it?

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: Yes, cases have come to me. Dr. Kurian has been writing a good number of letters to me. Every letter has been seen by me and a proper reply has been given. I naturally cannot go by one-sided version. I have to see to the things and then come to a conclusion. But I know one thing, that our dealing with the whole situation is that a telephone operator is not somebody coming from another island or another country or another planet. They have not come from somewhere else. They are like our brothers and sisters. This is the basic approach we are having with them. That is the way I deal with them. Naturally when that approach is there, I am sure there will be no difficulty; and I am sure your cooperation will also be forthcoming—if not now, at least after 1976. These are the facts on which you want to go.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: You may not be elected in many States.

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: That we will see. That is not far off. There is no use bragging; the results will say and that is shown in Kerala also. What I said is true.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: But do not wait for 1976 for victimisation to be removed.

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: I can say that there is no victimisation. I will only request that for God's sake, do not mislead the workers for a particular end

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Talking of one union here and getting other unions created, that type of thing will not do because people have gone into the depth of the whole thing.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: Why do you support scab unions?

SHRI S. D. SHARMA: I have said that Dr. Kurian has brought individual cases to my notice; I have gone into them without being influenced by the facts that Dr. Kurian has brought out because Dr. Kurian may have a certain point of view. But the individual is my own brother: he is from my own department. I have dealt with cases most sympathetically and I deal with them most sympathetically. So that way we are trying to deal with the whole situation. But there are other things also that we are trying to do. I am not taking much of your time about the other developments which have taken place where our engineers have done well.

Though the defects will still remain, I am sure that we will improve and a better service will be provided with your co-operation and with the co-operation of the State Governments. If there are any bottlenecks, we will solve them and get over them with the help of the workers because no Minister can do anything without their co-operation and I can tell you that this time the unions and the workers have been most co-operative. I have got that co-operation and with that I have the hope and strength to say that things are bound to improve, not because of me but because of the people who are working. the hundreds and thousands of people who are working in the P. & T. Department.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI LOKANATH MISRA): The House stands adjourned *sine die*.

The House then adjourned *sine die* at fortytwo minutes past six of the clock.