

difficult to give representation in the Board of Management to the worker. In view of the fact that the abolition of the multiplicity of the number of trade unions cannot be feasible as the situation stands to-day, will the Government consider it desirable that the representatives of the workers should be elected to the Board by secret ballot and whether it is the only way to create the necessary condition for the participation of the workers in the management?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : It is the question to be considered. The National Labour Commission did not recommend specifically how this can be solved. There are two methods—one at present is the verification and the other is by secret ballot. Points are being argued on both sides. By secret ballot it means that all the labour in that establishment should have the right to vote. That means it will mar the trade union movement in the country. That means that those who are in the establishment may be only about 15% and they will have the right. So I cannot say how it will be done but what we are doing is, we do not want to impose on anybody but certainly we want to carry conviction with the workers and have something with their consent. It may be by secret ballot or by some other method. That is the question we are trying to work out in detail.

SHRI B. K. KAUL : The decision taken about this participation, how far is it mandatory on the private and public sector managements and if they do not agree to the decision, how will the Minister get that decision implemented?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : As I said we have not yet formulated any law on this. The reply to the question says that we want to associate the workers' representatives on the public undertakings. We want naturally to give a lead and there are some, both in the private and public sectors, where they are trying to give some representation on the Board. For instance, now some trade union leaders are there in one or two Boards of Management. It should be the actual worker working in the unit. How it will be implemented, about that, details are being worked out. I cannot say 'yes' or 'no'.

SHRI B. K. KAUL : Where the management is not prepared to accept

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : We have not any law at present. We are trying to work out.

SHRI N. G. GOREY : I would like to know what will be the proportion on the Management Board of the workers and the shareholders.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : Mr. Chairman, I will not reply this question because we have not thought in terms of the ratio between them on the Board of Directors. What we have been thinking is giving representation to the worker; on the Board of Management. It can be one or two or anything, what it should be we have not thought. As I said we have not thought about this in term; of the ratio or of majority and minority

SHRI N. G. GOREY : I am only asking this question because suppose or a Board of Management consisting of 15 people there is only one representative of the workers, it is as good as no being there.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : I would not look at the question in that way. I would say instead of having none we have got *one* at least to put forward the point of view of the worker on the Board of Management.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Sir, on a point of order. The hon. Minister said he had not thought over this matter at all. Is it to be believed that when you are thinking of taking the workers' representatives on the Board of Management, it has not at all occurred ever to this thoughtless Government . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : No point of order please sit down.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : This is very important. They must have thought. You know it very well, Sir, as a human being. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am a human being, therefore I am asking you to sit down.

#### TELEPHONE SERVICE IN CALCUTTA

\*12. SHRI KALYAN ROY : f

SHRI Z. A. AHMAD :

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state .

f The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Kalyan Roy.

(a) whether Government are aware of the deep discontent among the Telephone subscribers in Calcutta because of the extremely poor service;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a series of letters which appeared in Calcutta press recently about the inefficiency of the Telephone Department; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to improve its efficiency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS (PROF. SHER SINGH) : (a) The service of Calcutta telephone system compares favourably with other large systems in India. Efforts are however continuously being made to improve it—

(b) Press complaints are being looked into promptly and remedial action is taken on specific difficulties brought to notice.

(c) The performance of the system is under constant observation and for any defects noticed corrective steps are taken promptly to eliminate the difficulties felt by the subscribers.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : Sir, I do not know whether you have had an occasion to go to Calcutta recently and contact someone over the telephone. I am sure the hon. Minister who is sitting quietly there and listening at us has not been to Calcutta, nor tried to contact anyone over the telephone because the whole system has absolutely collapsed. If you want to contact someone it is almost nightmarish; indeed it is a horrible experience. I would suggest the scrapping of the entire telephone system of Calcutta.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You put the question now.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : Has his attention been drawn to a series of letters which appeared recently in the Calcutta papers? In the Statesman of the 20th February there appeared a letter written by one Mr. Pal Ghosh. I am reading the letter, it says :

"At about 11 P.M. yesterday my wife shouted there was a fire..."

MR. CHAIRMAN : You don't read letters, please put the question.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : I will just refer to it, I am not reading. He says his house was on fire and his wife tried to contact the Fire Brigade. She tried 199 and nobody answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That is all right, please put your question.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : Similarly there is another letter.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, no.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : Then there is this in the Basumati of 25th March. They tried to contact the correspondent. They tried 197, 199, but no answer was there. Sir, it is a sad experience of the people when there is sickness in the house or when the house is on fire...

MR. CHAIRMAN : You put your question. There can be so many instances.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : My question is this. It is such a poor service in Calcutta. Is it due to very bad maintenance or is it due to shortage of staff or is it due to work load on the workers? In view of the complaints which are coming in from everywhere we have also raised the matter here—would you care to send a parliamentary team to see what is really rotten in the Calcutta Telephones and take drastic steps?

AN HON. MEMBER : It is so everywhere in the country.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : But it is such a big city, let the Minister reply.

SHRI SATYA NARAYAN SINHA : I think, Sir, the hon. Member has said so many things because the telephone system is not working properly in Calcutta but I do not know if the hon. Member has compared it with the systems in other cities like Delhi, Bombay and other places. But I think one thing perhaps my hon. friend has not mentioned among the factors which he feels contribute to the collapse of the telephone system, and that is that the political atmosphere there is responsible for it.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : What is this?

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : Sir, on a point of order.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : After this reply nobody could dare ask any question.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : Sir, I do not understand this temerity on the part of the Minister, this audacity on the part of the Minister. Sir, I would not like to use the term 'idiocy' because I cannot use it as it is not a parliamentary expression but I was shocked to hear the answer that the telephone system collapsed because of the political atmosphere.

MR. CHAIRMAN. : There is no point of order, please sit down.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : No, Sir. It is a very important point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, no, please sit down.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : I am just asking, is the Minister in order in relating the collapse of the telephone system in Calcutta to the political atmosphere.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That is no point of order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Sir, from my personal experience, humble experience, the climate is quite good. But take the case of my telephone 467149. I never get the correct number by dialling and for that reason I have given up dialling because when I ask for somebody, some other person comes on the line. Secondly...

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is not a question you have put. You are giving information.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Whether he is aware of such things, I want to know.

The second point is, all kinds of wrong numbers come to my telephone. This happens with many others also. Besides, the tapping is so much that the moment you lift the receiver there is noise of somebody. I think once the Chief Minister Mr. Ajoy Mukherjee, told me there was tapping. Everybody is telling this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please shorten your question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : So the telephones for one reason or another are tapped. I would like to know what steps the Government is going to take. Repeated demands to the telephone authorities to come and repair them and put

them right produce no result whatsoever and my friend is saying that the political climate is bad in Calcutta. Political climate is bad but nothing happens to the telephone bosses there. For that matter the Minister here. ] I would like to know whether the Government is prepared to undertake a thorough enquiry into the administration and working of the Calcutta telephone system in order to find out the main causes for such dislocation and disruption of the entire system and whether the Government has considered at any time the advisability of looking into these complaints at the ministerial or higher level in order to find out remedies and to see things right.

PROF. SHER SINGH : Sir, I agree with the hon. Member that there are sometimes wrong connections and there is some difficulty with the telephones. There has been inadequate supply of spare parts but now we have arranged better supply of spare parts. We are also importing some spare parts from outside the country wherever necessary. For the information of the hon. Member I may give some figures to show how much time on an average we take to remove faults in Calcutta, Bombay and other places. In Calcutta it is 2 hours, in Bombay it is 2.6 hours, in Delhi it is 1.7 and in Madras it is 1.5. So it is worse than Madras, worse than Delhi but better than Bombay. We have our own difficulties and we are trying to improve things by importing more spare parts. Now we are also manufacturing more spare parts in our country.

श्री मानसिंह वर्मा : श्रीमान्, बंगाल में तो असाधारण स्थिति के कारण आप यह उत्तर दे सकते हैं, पर और स्थानों पर भी इस अयोग्यता के कारण टेलीफोन सब्सक्राइबर्स को बड़ी कठिनाई महसूस होती है, जिस प्रकार अभी टेलीफोन किया अभी डिस्कनेक्शन हो गया, बात करनी शुरू की, डिस्कनेक्शन हो गया, एक एक दिन में दस-दस कॉल्स के डिस्कनेक्शन हुए, रॉय नम्बर आ रहे हैं...

श्री सभापति : आप सवाल करिए मेहरबानी करके।

श्री मानसिंह वर्मा : सवाल ही कर रहा हूँ।

श्री सभापति : सवाल नहीं है।

श्री मानसिंह बर्मा : आप ही बता दीजिए कि क्या सवाल करूं ? I know my job well.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes; yes, you know your job well. Therefore I am telling you.

श्री मानसिंह बर्मा : तो इस प्रकार की जो कमियां हैं उनको ठीक करने के लिए जितने समय की आवश्यकता है उससे अधिक समय लिया जाता है।

मैं माननीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान एक दूसरी शिकायत की ओर भी आकर्षित करना चाहूंगा और वह यह है कि टेलीफोन सब्सक्राइबर्स को एक बिल की बड़ी शिकायत होती है ऊलजलूल बिल आते हैं, अधिक मात्रा में उनका एमाउन्ट जग कर आता है और जब बारबार...

श्री सभापति : मैं आपको याद दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि यह कलकत्ता टेलीफोन का सवाल है।

श्री मानसिंह बर्मा : यह टेलीफोन्स के बारे में है।

श्री सभापति : कलकत्ता के टेलीफोन का सवाल है।

श्री मानसिंह बर्मा : जी नहीं, सारे देश के टेलीफोन का सवाल है। इस सवाल से दूसरे सवाल भी पैदा होते हैं। कलकत्ता की मिनिस्ट्री इस संबंध में अलग नहीं है।

श्री सभापति : इसके माने यह नहीं है कि आप सारे देश के टेलीफोन की बात करने लगे।

श्री मानसिंह बर्मा : यह दूसरे स्थानों के लिए भी हो सकता है। तो मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि टेलीफोन सब्सक्राइबर्स को संतोष हो सके, उनके हिसाब के मुताबिक ठीक बिल वे पा

सकें इसके लिए भी कई प्रश्न किये गये थे। तो क्या कोई डिवाइस इस प्रकार की सोची जा रही है कि उनको संतोष मिल सके ?

प्रो० शेर सिंह : सभापति महोदय, कलकत्ता में तो बिल के लिए खास तौर पर हमने प्रबंध किया है और वहां बहुत जल्दी बिल तैयार होकर आ जाते हैं। अगर आनरेबिल मेम्बर कोई शिकायत देंगे, बतलायेंगे कि इस तरह की गड़बड़ है तो हम उसकी जांच करवायेंगे और अगर उसमें कोई गलती मालूम होगी तो उसको ठीक भी करेंगे और जहां ऐसी गलती हम पकड़ लेते हैं वहां हम रिबेट भी देते हैं, पैसा वापस देते हैं। अगर आनरेबिल मेम्बर इस किस्म की कोई सूचना देंगे तो उसकी जांच करवा कर हम उस पर कार्यवाही करेंगे और अगर कोई गड़बड़ निकलेगी तो उसको ठीक भी करेंगे और रिबेट भी देंगे।

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : इस के लिए आप ने कोई योजना बनायी है क्या ? (No reply)

श्री गनेशीलाल चौधरी : मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि कलकत्ता में तो यह बात है ही, लेकिन देश के अनेक भागों में भी घटिया सेवा चल रही है। उत्तर प्रदेश के सीतापुर जिले में यह घटिया सेवा चल रही है। उसकी बाबत भी मंत्री जी को बताया गया है मंत्री जी उसमें कुछ कर रहे हैं क्या ?

प्रो० शेर सिंह : सभापति महोदय, कई कारण हैं गड़बड़ होने के टेलीफोन सर्विस में, शायद सीतापुर में ऐसी बात हो कि वह तारों की चोरी हो जाती हो। हजारों की संख्या में तार चोरी होने की शिकायतें आती हैं और इसलिए कापर वायरस को हम रिप्लेस कर रहे हैं। छोटे पार्ट्स टूट जाने की शिकायत है, हमारा इक्विपमेंट पुराना हो गया है उस के कारण भी गड़बड़ होती है। हमने पिछले

दिनों एक कमेटी बैठायी थी और उसने सिफारिश की थी कि दस परसेंट हमको स्पेयर पार्ट्स बनाने चाहिए। हम आई० टी० आई० बंगलौर में स्पेयर पार्ट्स बनवा रहे हैं और हम पूरी शक्ति लगा रहे हैं कि हम अपनी सविस को इम्प्रूव कर सकें।

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Chatterjee, last question.

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE : No, Sir. I want to put a question.

SHRI SALIL KUMAR GANGULY : I want to put a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Thirty-three minutes we have taken so far on two questions. Will you please allow me to pass on to another question? Otherwise, I will go on with this only.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : Is the hon. Minister aware that as far as the Calcutta Telephones are concerned, calls for assistance by dialling No. 199 number about 20,000 in 24 hours? If so, will he enlighten the House whether there is a fundamental and substantial defect in the telephone lines laid underground and, if so, will the hon. Minister also tell the House whether the fault in the lines which are laid underground lead to these cross-connections and wrong connections and it is leading to such a heavy demand upon the operators of No. 199 to the extent of 20,000 every 24 hours? Will he see that the fault in the underground cables is immediately rectified and will he pull up or do something as far as the engineering department of the Calcutta Telephones is concerned? Finally, may I know whether he agrees to the proposal of Mr. Bhupesh Gupta and whether he is prepared to set up a commission of enquiry to look into the entire question ?

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI : The underground political parties must be responsible for this.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Underground parties do not function in telephone exchanges. You were underground a long time ago.

PROF. SHER SINGH : In Calcutta there is a very long waiting list running into a lakh and six thousand...

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : Is that relevant ?

PROF. SHER SINGH : Because of this big unsatisfied demand, there is rush of traffic and cross-connections and all these things sometimes do happen. Also sometimes. . . {Interruptions}.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, please listen.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : I seek your protection.

SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI : Is it an argument? The long waiting list and cross-connections, how are these two related ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let him finish his reply. He should be allowed to reply.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : You are also hearing his reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am hearing his reply. I may request Members to allow the Minister to complete his sentence. Please, Mr. Bhandari, you know it.

PROF. SHER SINGH : I am giving some causes as to why cross-connections and all these things sometimes take place. That is because there is a big unsatisfied demand and a rush of traffic. That is one cause. There are some defects in the switching equipment also. We accept it. As regards No. 199, it is quite effective and I may inform the hon. House that at present it is handling about 36,000 calls daily.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : How-many per minute?

PROF. SHER SINGH : You can calculate it.

{Interruptions}.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please calculate it yourself. Please allow the business of the House to go on.

PROF. SHER SINGH : We make some test observations every now and then and see whether No. 199 is functioning effectively. Our test observations reveal that it is quite effective in handling such a large number of calls.

SHRI KRISHN KANT : Are you satisfied with the reply? What is the connection between the waiting list and its wrong functioning?

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is all right. I am satisfied. Please sit down.

SHRI BANK BEHARY DAS : On a point of order . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do you want to spend the whole time on one question?

SHRI BANK BEHARY DAS : I am on a point of order. It is a fantastic reply. You must know, Sir, that 36,000 calls per day correspond to five calls a second. Is it possible?

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right. Please sit down.

SHRI PRANB KUMAR MUKHERJEE : May I know from the Minister whether it is a fact that the former Chief Minister, Mr. V. Joy Kumar Mukherjee, complained for days to the telephone authorities about the tapping of his telephone and, if so, what are the results of the enquiry? No. 2, may I know whether it is a fact that even now a group of telephone operators being patronised by the Marxists dominated co-ordination committee, are tapping the telephones of different political parties regularly? It is a regular feature. May I know whether the Minister is going to enquire into the matter and let this House know about the result of the enquiry?

SHRI SATYA NARAYAN SINHA : May I say something about what we are going to do to the Calcutta telephone system? There is no doubt about it that the Calcutta telephone system is not working very satisfactorily.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : It is a disgrace.

SHRI SATYA NARAYAN SINHA : You may call it a disgrace, but you compare it very favourably with other places. That also you must know. These are the steps that we are taking to improve the performance of the Calcutta telephone system. An adequate supply of very essential spare parts has been arranged. We are also trying to import items which are in short supply. We are doing it on a very high priority basis for Calcutta. Additional equipment has been allotted on priority to enable the exchanges to

meet their heavy traffic. Continuous observation is being made of the various services rendered by the Calcutta telephone system and necessary corrective action is taken. Statistical quality control techniques have been introduced. In the afternoon the performance of the various units is watched closely so as to improve them. Let us wait and see how it functions.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : They get their P.A.'s dialling all the time. They do not understand why people get difficulty. They have got an army of P.A.'s just to dial. So they can afford to give such irresponsible answers.

SHRI SALIL KUMAR GANGULY : May I know why trunk call charges from Calcutta to New Delhi are higher than from any other town in West Bengal to New Delhi?

PROF. SHER SINGH : What is the question?

SHRI SALIL KUMAR GANGULY : May I know why trunk call charges from Calcutta to New Delhi are much higher in comparison to trunk call charges from any other town in West Bengal to New Delhi?

PROF. SHER SINGH : About the charges of telephone it depends upon the distance. The rates are fixed according to the distance that is covered by the trunk call.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : On behalf of the people of Calcutta one question. Mr. Sinha is a *de jure* Minister. The telephone system should be deluxed.

अकाल के कारण लोगों की मृत्यु

\* 123. श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी :†

श्री जयदीप प्रसाद माधुर :

क्या खाद्य तथा कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) राजस्थान के जैसलमेर, बाड़मेर, बीकानेर, जोधपुर और जालोर जिलों में 1968 तथा 1969 के वर्ष में जो अकाल

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sunder Singh Bhandari.