

Digitization of cable TV networks

†1769. SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a decision has been taken for mandatory digital connection by terminating cable connections on television sets in the metropolitan cities;
- (b) if so, the number of employees engaged in cable connection who would become jobless;
- (c) by when digital connections would be implemented throughout the country and how the consumers would be benefited thereby;
- (d) whether Government is considering to make the digital connections cheaper by putting pressure on some of the big companies; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI) : (a) to (c) Based on the recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has taken necessary steps to implement Digital Addressable Systems (DAS) in the Cable TV sector. The Ministry *vide* its notification S.O No. 2534(E), dated 11.11.2011 has notified dates for implementation of DAS in four phases. Implementation of DAS was completed in 3 out of the planned 4 metros of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata by the mandated time line of 31st October, 2012. In Chennai the matter is *sub-judice* in the High Court of Madras. In the second phase, 38 cities with a population more than one million will be covered by 31st March, 2013. All other urban areas (Municipal Corporations/Municipalities) will undertake digital transition by 30th September, 2014 and the rest of India by 31st December, 2014. Digitization would benefit all stakeholders, including the cable operators and consumers. The implementation of DAS would enable cable operators to re-design their business and be more competitive. They would be able to effectively compete with DTH service providers and retain business. Moreover, the cable operators would be able to provide consumers with advanced high quality services, improved picture and sound quality, multiple choices of channels, movies and games on demand etc. It would enable them to provide broadband services. Digitisation would also entail improved consumer services through setting up of Toll Free numbers and consumer grievance redressal mechanisms by service providers.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) and (e) TRAI's Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Fourth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2010, dated 21st July, 2010, as amended on 30.4.2012, regulates tariff and pricing for the digital cable TV Systems. The said tariff order, *inter-alia*, provides that the operators of digital addressable cable TV systems would offer to the consumers a Basic-Service-Tier (BST) comprising of minimum 100 free-to-air (FTA) channels at a maximum charge of Rs. 100/- (excluding taxes) per subscriber per month.

Digital addressable system in Maharashtra

1770. DR. BHARAT KUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is planning to focus predominantly on Maharashtra to shift from analog to digital addressable system after the digitization of TV signals in four metropolitan cities;
- (b) the details of cities which would primarily be chosen for digital system in that State;
- (c) whether any deadline has been fixed for digitization in those cities; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI) : (a) to (d) Based on the recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has taken necessary steps to implement Digital Addressable Systems (DAS) in the Cable TV sector in four phases in the entire country. The first phase of implementation of DAS has been completed. In the second phase, 38 cities with a population more than one million will be covered by 31st March, 2013. Out of these 38 cities, nine cities, namely, Aurangabad, Kalyan Dumbivli, Nagpur, Nashik, Navi Mumbai, Pimpri Chinchward, Pune, Sholapur and Thane are in the State of Maharashtra. Since DAS is being implemented in the entire country, there is no predominant focus on a particular State. The objective of the Ministry is to implement DAS in the entire country within mandated timeline. The implementation of DAS in the third and fourth phase would comprise all other urban areas (Municipal Corporations/ Municipalities) of the country by 30th September, 2014 and the rest of India by 31st December, 2014.