

thankful to the Chair. I also take this opportunity to mention that Bangladesh, which became independent 25 years later than India, has been able to reduce the growth rate considerably. India should take a cue from Bangladesh in this regard. I also take this opportunity to mention about the 79th Constitution amendment Bill. This Bill provides an opportunity to the representatives of the people, both in Parliament and State Legislatures, to show themselves as role models. The Government should consider the recommendations of the Standing Committee on HRD. Extensive discussion should be held with all parties and a consensus should be arrived at as early as possible.

Since every Member agrees with my resolution and the Government is also in agreement with the proposals I have made in the Resolution, I request the Minister to accept the Resolution as per the Prime Minister's assurance. I am withdrawing my Resolution. Thank you, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, very much. Does he have the leave of the House to withdraw the Resolution, under the assurances?

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, as we still have some time out of the Private Members' Business, Shri V.V. Raghavan wants to read out his Resolution and then he would withdraw it. He will take only one minute. Mr. Raghavan, please don't make a long speech because today is the last day and everybody has to catch his train or plane.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN (Kerala): Madam, I will take only two minutes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Privatisation and Corporatisation of Telecom Sector

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN (Kerala): Hon. Deputy Chairperson, first of all, I move the following Resolution.

"Having regard to the fact that Government's decision to corporatise the Department of Telecom Services (DTS) and consequent disinvestment of MTNL and DTS; and to privatise long distance telephone services will have its detrimental effects:-

- (i) on the development of telecom network in rural and economically backward areas.
- (ii) on the welfare of the officers, workers and employees in the telecom sector;

and will create a serious problem in networking and carrying out anti-insurgency operations in J and K and North Eastern areas, this House urges upon the Government to retrace from the present policy of privatisation and corporatisation of the telecom sector."

Madam, the telecom is one of the few undertakings, Government Departments, which is not only self-supporting but also earning a surplus revenue of about Rs.7,000-10,000 crores annually.

It has been able to build up assets worth Rs. 62, 000 crores over the last 30-40 years. It has been possible for it to provide services below-the-cost to about 70-80% of our people, who are living in villages, in backward areas and in urban areas. Of course, it is exempted from paying various taxes which enables it to subsidise its services and expand them.

Madam, if we corporatise and privatise it, we cannot expand our services to villages. Madam, since the hon. Prime Minister and the concerned Minister is here, without wasting any more time of the House, I request the Government to reconsider and revise its decision. It should be done by taking into account the security aspects. Privatising the telecom services is a security risk also. So, I earnestly request the Government and, especially, the Prime Minister to reconsider this decision.

The question was proposed.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : Madam, the hon. Member has raised some important points. I have taken a serious note of it. We will discuss these things in future. We will try our best to sort out all these problems. I would request the hon. Member kindly to withdraw his Resolution.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Madam, about three lakh employees are on a two-day's strike. Notice for a strike from 6th of September has been served. The BMS has also given the strike notice. Please consider it

seriously. With the hope that the Government would consider it seriously, I withdraw my Resolution.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now, we have another problem to solve. There are about 30 Special Mentions. Now, as the Special Mentions have been given in writing — as we did in the last Session — if the Members oblige, they could lay it on the Table of the House. Your written statement will be considered as spoken in the House, and I assure you that they will be sent to the concerned Ministries. Have I the permission of the House to do so?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal) : Madam, as per the practice, you read out from the Chair, the names of the Members and the subject on which they have given their Special Mentions. Thereafter, it will be laid. In this way, the concerned Member and the House also know as to whose Special Mentions have been laid on the Table of the House. This will take hardly two-three minutes. You read out the names of the Members and the subject; and thereafter, they will be laid on the Table of the House.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Okay; now, I will read it. ...*(Interruptions)*.

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : महोदया, मैं आप से एक निवेदन करना चाहूंगी। मुझे इस में कोई आपत्ति नहीं थी....*(व्यवधान)*... लेकिन यह स्पेशल मेंशन दूसरी तरह का है। प्रधान मंत्री जी भी यहां पर बैठे हुए हैं। मैं नहीं समझती कि इस को टेबिल पर रखने की जरूरत है।...*(व्यवधान)*... मैडम, यह महिलाओं का मामला है और आप सदारत कर रही हैं।....*(व्यवधान)*... यह बहुत ही गंभीर मामला है, इसलिए मैं ने आप से अर्ज की।

उपसभापति : मैं आप की बात की गंभीरता को समझती हूँ, मगर मैं एक एक्सेप्शन करूंगी तो मुझे सब के साथ करना पड़ेगा, नहीं तो मेरी ईमानदारी पर लोगों को शक होगा। इसलिए बेहतर होगा कि मैं ये सब नाम पढ़ दूँ। अभी प्रणब मुखर्जी साहब ने इस के लिए रिक्वेस्ट की और करेक्ट सॉल्यूशन बताया ताकि यह हो जाए। अब अगर हम उस से थोड़ा भी डिविएट करेंगे तो फिर मैं किस बुनियाद पर दूसरों से कहूंगी कि आप मत बोलिए।....*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Goa) : Madam, I am on a point of order. I would like to know whether a Member who is not present in the House can make a Special Nlention. This will be wonderful.