

[4 August, 2003]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The provision of satellite C-Band link to AIR, Bikaner will not affect the availability of programmes/radio transmission at Bikaner which were available hitherto. The C-Band down link at Bikaner has been provided as a part of scheme to improve internal Radio-net-working of AIR *i.e.* to provide superior quality digital facility, for contribution/distribution of programmes from Delhi, Mumbai and other State Capitals.

(c) Yes, Sir. There are several artists, performers and resource persons, available locally, in and around Bikaner, who regularly perform for All India Radio, Bikaner, to project local music, art and culture for the benefit of local listeners.

(d) All India Radio, Bikaner produces and broadcast programmes independently within the parameters of decency and aesthetic quality set for all stations of All India Radio and by adhering to the prescribed code of AIR.

(e) Does not arise.

Documentary film on Sikkim

1585. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the great film maker Satyajit Ray had made a documentary film on Sikkim on being assigned in 1971 by the then ruler of Sikkim;

(b) whether the film was banned in India;

(c) whether following the merger of Sikkim in 1975 Government acquired or attempted to acquire the film especially keeping in view the cinematic and archival qualities expected in a creation by one of the greatest film maker of world;

(d) if so, the present status thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR

PRASAD): (a) to (e) The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has informed that the film 'SIKKIM' was refused certification in the 1970s. Records of that period pertaining to this film are not available with this Ministry.

Tariff for cable channels

†1586. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to decide the tariff for cable channels, if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(b) whether the task force has submitted its report to Government and if so, the main recommendations thereof;

(c) the incident of the cable TV industry which lead Government to start CAS; and

(d) whether it is in public interest and the basis thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Government has specified Rs. 72/- (Plus taxes) as the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less than 30 free-to-air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programmes and music. Additional free-to-air channels would also be available to subscribers within the maximum amount mentioned. However, decision on tariff of pay channels does not come within the provisions of Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.

(b) Yes, Sir. The recommendations of the Task Force *inter-alia* included the need to specify the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less than 30 free to air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programme and music in Hindi, English or the regional language, subject to availability in the area.

(c) and (d) With a view to regulating the arbitrary hike in subscription rates charged by the Cable Operators from subscribers,

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.