

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, February 28, 1994/
Phalguna, 9, 1915 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Doordarshan Programmes on Agriculture

*61. SHRI K.G. SHIVAPPA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is persistent demand to increase the duration of programmes on agriculture telecast by Delhi Doordarshan and Regional Centres of Doordarshan;

(b) whether the Government have increased the duration of such programmes during 1993 according to the demand;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the time by which the needful is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO): (a) Details of requests for enhancing the duration of programmes telecast by the various kendras of Doordarshan are not maintained centrally in a compiled form.

(b) While no increase in the duration of such programmes was effected by Doordarshan during 1993, the reach of the existing programmes has increased alongwith the expansion of the Doordarshan network that took place during the year.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Revision of the programme schedule is an ongoing activity depending upon the overall programme requirement of the network at a given time. No increase in the duration of such programmes is on the anvil at present.

SHRI K.G. SHIVAPPA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a very big farmer class in India. But television has neglected the farmer's class. The Government has given more importance to improving agriculture by using fertilizers, pesticides, drip irrigation and also by giving more subsidies. But more duration has not been given to agricultural programmes on television. It is just neglected. In these circumstances, I would like to know whether the hon. Minister could provide, specifically for farmer's class, a separate channel called 'Farmers' Channel' as is given to business class and also like DD Metro, and if so, when it will be done.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: The hon. Member has said that farm sector has been neglected. I would like the House to judge whether it is neglected or not. I will give you facts and figures. Firstly, Doordarshan Kendra, Delhi telecasts Krishi Darshan on every Monday, Tuesday and Friday for a duration of 25 minutes at 7.00 p.m. Another ten minutes programme specifically meant for States like Haryana, Western U.P. and Himachal Pradesh is also telecast from Delhi.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: You should not only give the time but should also give when exactly and which hour of the day it is telecast. That is very important.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: I mentioned it as 7.00 p.m. Then for *Gramin Mahilaon ke liye*, there is a programme on 1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesday at 7.00 p.m. for 25 minutes; *Gramin yuvakon ke liye* again there is a programme on 2nd Wednesday at 7.00 p.m. for 25 minutes; *Gramin bachchon ke liye* there is a programme on the fourth Wednesday at 7.00 p.m. for 25 minutes. Then in the regional channels also, agricultural programmes are shown. Consultations are done with the Ministries or Departments of Rural Development, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Banking, Irrigation and Non-Conventional Energy which has a bearing on agriculture.

Consultations are also held with Health and Family Welfare Ministry, as part of the agricultural community development and functional literacy programmes. Would you like me to give the details for all the States?

MR SPEAKER: Is it possible for you to give the percentage of time due?

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Sir, with regard to Delhi, as I have mentioned, on Channel II, it is shown once a week with a duration of 15 minutes.

MR. SPEAKER: What is the percentage of the entire time allotted?

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Sir, in a minute, I will give you the details very quickly.

In Bombay, it is five days a week programme with a duration of 30 minutes on each day; in Calcutta, it is once a month and once a week programme with a duration of 30 minutes and 25 minutes respectively, being telecast at 7.00 p.m. in Madras, it is four days a week and also once a week programme in the Second Channel with a duration of 30 minutes each; in Jalandhar, it is four days a week programme with a duration of 15 minutes; in Srinagar, it is four days a week programme with 30 minutes duration; in Lucknow, it is five days a week programme with 30 minutes duration; in Hyderabad, it is four days a week programme with 35 minutes duration; in Cuttack, it is four days a week programme with 20 minutes duration and in Ranchi, it is once a week programme with a duration of 15 minutes. *(Interruptions)* What I was trying to say is that we are not neglecting it.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not convenient to give the percentage value.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: It is very difficult to give it in percentage terms because it changes from Kendra to Kendra.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Why do not give the details in percentage value from Kendra to Kendra?

MR. SPEAKER: Now the hon. Member may ask the second supplementary question.

SHRI K.G. SHIVAPPA: Sir, the farmers belong to a poor class and they are unable to purchase the TV sets to see the programmes. Now, almost all villages have their own community halls where they have their own cultural activities. So, considering the fact that they belong to a poor class, will the Government, with the cooperation of the State Governments, provide these TV sets free of cost to these community halls in the villages? I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government, under these circumstances, will supply the TV sets to the community halls.

MR. SPEAKER: This does not arise out of this question.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARARAO VADDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in spite of your persistent and clear question to the hon. Minister requesting him to express it in percentage value, the hon. Minister, is not able to give that information since he does not have that information right at the moment. We do understand that.

But it is an obvious fact that the time allotted to the agricultural sector is very very less. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, in view of the present situation where the agricultural extension work is not upto the mark, and in view of the fact that nearly one-third of the Gross Domestic Product comes from the agricultural sector, whether Doordarshan will give more time in the channels of the regional centres so that the farmers can be better educated, informed about the needs for optimum utilisation of irrigation water and requisite doses of fertilizers. Many a times, it is happening, Mr.

Speaker, Sir, that the farmers, in their anxiety to achieve more production, are applying more and excessive dosages of pesticides and fertilizers, sometimes, leading to drastic adverse effects on the fertility of the soil itself in the long run. Doordarshan is the most effective, powerful instrument to take the fruits of research to the farmer's notice. So, I would like to know, whether the Doordarshan will make its stand clear on its attitude towards agricultural sector and give more time for this.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Sir, as far as the question whether extension works are upto the mark or not is concerned, it is not my Ministry, but it is the Agriculture Ministry which has to respond on it. We have a Rural Programme Advisory Committee composed of experts from the State Governments, Central Government, Agricultural Universities, agricultural institutions and the rural development. And whatever programmes are suggested by them, the various regional Kendras follow the recommendations made by that Committee. It is not monitored from Delhi. Every Kendra has an independent Rural Programme Advisory Committee and a Programme Advisory Committee. I will certainly pass on this information to them so that they can consider the same. Otherwise, it looks as though we are passing the orders from here.

MR. SPEAKER: If necessary, in policy matters, we expect the ministry to pass the orders.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: On policy matters, yes; but we do not interfere on the question of duration and we leave it to them. They are all experts in this field.

MR. SPEAKER: Agriculturalists are not in a position to provide the money for

advertisements. And agriculture is the main business, the main avocation of our people and information on agriculture is very important.

We would rather request the Ministry to look into the matter and take a proper decision.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: What is the direction on the duration, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: This is the wish of the House.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to the question regarding increasing the duration of telecasting the agricultural programmes, the hon. Minister has said that at present no increase in duration of telecasting such programmes is on anvil. Sir, agricultural programmes are directly related to the ordinary farmers living in villages and in the present circumstances, the rural culture is deteriorating day by day. In view of this peculiar situation, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has any plan to make special arrangements to telecast more and more programmes regarding agriculture for promoting the glorious traditions of the country.

[*English*]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Is it about culture or the agricultural culture?

MR. SPEAKER: Culture is omnibus. Agriculture is a part of it.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Our culture is agriculture and it is our endeavour to show it more and more.

Hiring of Lobbyist in US

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*62. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA:

SHRI SUDARSAN RAY CHOUHDURI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have hired any firm for lobbying in the US;

(b) if so, the name of the firm and the salient features of the terms of appointment including fees to be paid to the firm;

(c) the criteria adopted for the selection of the firm;

(d) whether the services of associations and organisations of Indians in that country are being used to project a proper image of the country on various political and economic issues; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the results achieved thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) to (e) A *Statement* is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

1. On 12 January, 1994 the Embassy of India, Washington, signed an agreement engaging the services of the law firm M/s McAuliffe, Kelly and Raffaelli in association with the public relations firm of Daniel J. Edelman Worldwide Inc. The contract signed is initially for a period of six months at the all inclusive rate of US \$ 46,000 per month.