

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6700

ANSWERED ON:08.05.2003

GRIEVANCES OF CABLE OPERATORS/VIEWERS

RENUKA CHOWDHURY;S. SAIDUZZAMAN

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the cable operators have threatened to go on strike by stopping their relaying in metropolitan cities;
- (b) if so, the main grievances of the cable operators;
- (c) whether the work of cable operators cross the main roads and through fares causing hinderances and frequent breakdowns and wires dangling all over in a chaotic manner;
- (d) if so, whether the Government propose to put its foot down on the cable operators who are fleecing the consumers and set up a separate agency in collaboration with viewers specially to cater to the work of TV cables and also speedily introduce internet services through the cable network all over the country;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government to resolve these problems?

Answer

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

(a), (b) & (c): No, Sir. Government is not aware of a strike threat by the cable operators in any metropolitan city as a protest against the policy on cable networks. The cable used by cable operator is mainly coaxial cable, which at times may cross main roads and throughfares.

(d) to (f): Taking into account the public dissatisfaction against arbitrary hike in subscription rates, the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, has been amended with a view to enable consumers to choose and pay for the pay channels of their choice and to ensure that every subscriber receives at least a minimum number of free-to-air channels, at a reasonable cost. Government will regulate the price of basic service tier. In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of Section 4A of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, the Central Government has notified 15th January, 2003 as the date within six months from which, it shall be obligatory for every cable operator to transmit/retransmit programmes of every pay channel through an addressable system in the four metro cities, namely, Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi. Thereafter, a set top box will be required to view the paychannels, and not for free-to-air channels.