

figures. So far as the potential is concerned, it was 6:37 lakhs at the end of the Second Plan. It was 6:64 lakhs in 1961-62 and 8:57 lakhs at the end of 1962-63. The utilisation figures are respectively 4:64 lakhs, 5:14 lakhs and 7:01 lakhs. The latest position is likely to be about 13:44 lakhs. Slowly it is improving all the time.

A.I.R. Broadcasts to West Asia

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*977. { Shri Sidheshwar Prasad:
Shri Indrajit Gupta:

Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the news item published in the *Statesman* of the 4th April, under the Title "A.I.R. Broadcasts to West Asia: Need to change to Medium Waves"; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to improve broadcasts to listeners in West Asia?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (Shri Sham Nath): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In view of the geographical location of India in relation to West Asia as well as the propagational characteristics and limitations of medium-wave transmissions, a medium wave transmitter located on Indian territory is not, by itself capable of covering the West Asian countries. The question of overcoming this obstacle is receiving the attention of Government.

श्री सिद्धेश्वर प्रसाद : क्या यह बात सही है कि पश्चिमी एशिया को आकाशवाणी से जो कार्यक्रम प्रसारित किया गया तो ६ महीने तक वहाँ बिलकुल आवाज सुनाई नहीं पड़ी और उस के बाद जो कार्यक्रम प्रसारित किये गये वे भी साफ सुनाई नहीं पड़ते रहे तो ऐसी स्थिति में क्या सरकार ने और ट्रान्समीटर्स लगाये हैं या ऐसा कोई अन्य उपाय सोचा है जिस से कि यह कार्य-

क्रम साफ सुना जा सके और हमारा पैसा बेकार न जाय ?

श्री शाम नाथ : यह बात सही नहीं है कि ६ महीने तक यहाँ से जो ब्राडकास्ट हुए वह सुनाई ही नहीं दिये लेकिन इस की जांच की गई है और यह बात जरूर सही है कि वेस्ट एशियन कंट्रीज में रिसीप्शन उतना अच्छा नहीं है जितना कि अन्य कंट्रीज में है। जहाँ तक गवर्नमेंट के क्रम उठाने का सवाल है यह काफ़ी कम्प्लेकेटेड मामला है और फिर मीडियम ट्रान्समीटर लगाने से ही उस का हल नहीं निकल सकता है। इस में और भी बहुत सी चीज़ें करनी होंगी और उन के ऊपर गवर्नमेंट शोर कर रही है।

श्री सिद्धेश्वर प्रसाद : अभी मंत्री जी ने बतलाया कि केवल मीडियम वेव से काम नहीं चलेगा क्योंकि यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण सवाल है और पश्चिमी देशों से हमारा सम्बन्ध स्थापित करना बहुत जरूरी है तो ऐसी हालत में और दूसरे कौन से क्रदम सरकार उठा रही है या अभी नहीं उठाये हैं तो कब तक उठायेगी ?

श्री शाम नाथ : सब से बड़ा सवाल इस में फॉरेन ऐक्सचेंज का है। जब तक कि बहुत बड़ा एक ट्रान्समीटर न लगाया जाय और उस के साथ साथ मीडियम लोकेशन में कोई ट्रान्समीटर न लगे उस वक्त तक प्रोग्राम का बिलकुल साफ़ और अच्छे तरीके से सुनना वहाँ नामुमकिन है। फॉरेन ऐक्सचेंज की कमी इस में सब से बड़ी बाधा है। वैसे रिसीप्शन को सुधारने की कोशिश हो रही है और ५, ६ ट्रान्समीटर्स जिनका कि प्राबिजन थर्ड फाइव इयर प्लान में है उन को जल्दी से जल्दी लगाने की कोशिश हो रही है।

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: May I know, Sir, how many foreigners are employed in the West Asian language units of the All-India Radio and after Government's unfortunate experience of the former employees and personnel

in the Portuguese language unit and the Chinese language unit, has Government taken steps to accelerate the process of Indianisation of all our language units in All-India Radio, in view of the fact that Indians are the best linguists in the world?

Shri Sham Nath: Sir, I would require notice. That supplementary does not arise out of this question.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Notice of what, Sir, you please help him.

Mr. Speaker: What he means to say is really, in a way, a suggestion and also seeking some information. He wants to know whether any steps are being taken to substitute those foreigners who are employed there in these broadcasts by Indians themselves who can very well do those duties in the foreign languages in the world.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: We have the best linguists in the world.

Shri Sham Nath: We always try to do that; but at present there is nothing which we could do more.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I could not hear the last part of it.

Mr. Speaker: Every effort is being made to do that.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: What effort?

Shri Joachim Alva: Since the emergency, are we just satisfied with the Arabic Unit that is working? Is it working fast enough or have we increased the personnel in the Arabic Unit or the West Asia Unit as we call it?

Shri Sham Nath: We think the Arabic Unit is working quite satisfactorily as we have not received any complaint against its working.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Has the Listeners' Research Unit applied itself to listening in this part of the world; if so, may I know the number of letters that we receive per month and what kind of content those letters have?

Shri Sham Nath: We sometimes get information regarding the position of our broadcasts from our Embassies and we have not recently received any complaint in regard to the Arabic Unit.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Sir, he has not understood my question. We have the Listeners' Research Unit in the AIR—perhaps the hon. Minister does not know anything about it. I want to know whether that Listeners' Research Unit applies itself to this problem; if so, does it get any letters and what kind of letters does it get?

Shri Sham Nath: This question relates to reception in foreign countries. I think the hon. Member is referring to the Listeners' Research Unit which we have got here while he wants to know how many letters we get from listeners, from where?

Shri D. C. Sharma: From there.

Shri Sham Nath: We do not get any letters from listeners in foreign countries.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri: May I know what are the languages in which broadcasts are made from this West Asian Unit?

Shri Sham Nath: In Western Asian Service for Afghanistan in Pushto, in Persian for Persia, in Arabic for Saudi Arabia, Egypt etc., and in French also for other parts of West Asia.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: No Hebrew?

Mr. Speaker: Next Question—Shri Yajnik.

An Hon. Member: He is not in his seat.

Mr. Speaker: Next Question—Shri P. C. Borooah.

Shrimati Renuka Ray: Please allow me to put one supplementary.

Mr. Speaker: I would have gladly done that, but that would upset the whole procedure now.